

# ACE

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ADVANCEMENT

AMIGA & PC  
EXCLUSIVE

# ROBOWARS!

Cyberfight and Robozone prepare for the Mechanoid Apocalypse!



# WIN!

£6.00 of CD Goodies

# EXCLUSIVE!

Heart Of China Review

**PLUS**  
**30 PAGES**

Of Hard Info  
in the Pinks

# PRETTY PICTURES!

From the Imagina  
Graphics Show

# POWER!

The Top 50 Industry  
Heavyweights  
Named!

# VISION ON!

TV in your Face

30 PAGES OF REVIEWS AND PREVIEWS INCLUDING: JETFIGHTER 2, MYTH, QUEST, LORDS OF CHAOS, LOGICAL, ROROCOD, CHINTO'S REVENGE, RORIM HO, F-ZERO, MONKEY ISLAND, TRIAL BY FIRE, STELLAR 7, METAL MUTANTS



# GUNSHIP<sup>TM</sup> —2000—

In 1986, MicroProse released Gunship, an Apache AH-64A attack helicopter simulation which sold copy after copy and won award after award. It was hailed as the definitive chopper simulation.

Five years later, after the success of Operation Desert Storm, MicroProse present Gunship 2000. High-tech air supremacy provided unmatched military power. Now high-tech computer technology provides the untouchable chopper simulation.



# Tomorrow's Technology Today

Gunship 2000 simulates an amazing seven of the US Army's most technologically advanced rotor craft. For each of hundreds of different missions the player considers the special capabilities of each helicopter type and selects a squad of five chaps, and then designates state-of-the-art weaponry to each chopper. Its the first multi-copter simulation ever to reach the mass market.

The action takes place in Central Europe and the Persian Gulf, each theatre containing three different arenas. Your crew members will increase in skill over time; your job is to make the best use of each crew member's abilities and to oversee and coordinate the battle tactics of the squad.

Topographical 3-D graphics show terrain with depressions, such as river banks and valleys, and elevations, like mountains and ridges, making low-altitude flight stunningly realistic. Each helicopter looks and handles just like the real thing.

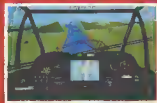
There are a multitude of game options to choose from; training, single, and multiple helicopter missions, a campaign game, and in flight options allowing realistic or easy flight, landings, weather, and variable wind conditions.

A huge range of views allow you to see action from anywhere within the theatre of conflict. From within the cockpit you can see ahead, left and right, or you can watch from the top of the rotor shaft, via chase view, tact-view, remote camera, 360° panorama, or ride-the-missile view.

With the added ability to call in artillery and fixed wing support when its available and needed, and a mission builder for designing and saving your own missions, Gunship 2000 offers you the complete state-of-the-art simulation of a frontline battlefield.

**MICRO PROSE™**  
SIMULATION • SOFTWARE

Gunship 2000 will be available soon for IBM PC compatibles



# reviews

This issue carries more games reviews than we could fit on the ST Intro page! So, here's the full rundown.

ON COMPUTER AND CONSOLE pages 50-83

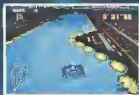
2 RD / OS Snow Magazine

"All we ask is that we be left alone."

Jefferson Davis, claiming to bracket the victim to hand from the slave in his negation.



ACE  
pick up  
more



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pick up  
more



ACE  
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## POWER EXTREME!

Contrary to popular belief, the computer games industry is no longer controlled by a spotty olks with high IQs and whizz-kid businessmen. Instead, a group of young men and women with more financial muscle than you would believe are deciding *right now* the games you will be buying and playing next Christmas.

So here, in another blistering ACE exclusive, we name the Top 50 industry powerbrokers and slot their functions into the complex jigsaw of games publishing.

Full report on pages 18,19,21,27,31,35 and 37.

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When you've enjoyed the American-made LaserDisc, you'll find again, since a Canadian company is working on multi-systems for an existing system that will enable users to switch video, play games. (After the audio tracks and some data all on the same system. See page 36.)

## HOT. DAMN HOT.

The sun comes up, the day begins, and it won't be long before we're drinking it in. Fruit juices all round at the ACE office, since the heat is so intense. But it's not the Sun we have to thank for our *très chaud* condition, it's being at the blistering white-hot lesser-edge of computer entertainment that's giving us beady-brows. This issue we report on the *Revenge of the Laserdisk*, imagine what movie licences of the near future could turn out like, examine the phenomena of *The Robot in Games*, and report from Monte Carlo on the *Imagina Graphics Show*. And for readers with an interest in *Industry shenanigans*, we name the Top 50 figures in the business. And there's the usual excellent coverage of the latest games for your machine. Non-essential reading? We think not.

# features

WIN! WIN! WIN!

Only available, of course, in one of our exclusive competitions, is the chance for you to win Software Corner's Laser-Disk

games system, complete with an interface for your Amiga, PC or ST, and a bundle of software. Turn to Page 33

Just one of the amazing images on show at the Imagine Exhibition last month for a full run-down on the very latest steps in the crazy world of graphics, turn to page 32.



## COVER STORY

The robot has always been a popular brand of hero, from the earliest games like *Robotron* and *Alien* to the most action-packed classics like *Andrino 2* and *Robocop* to modern day outings *Robocop 2* & 3 and the forthcoming *Terminator 2*.

Here we examine the genre and in particular present two giant robot games, *Miramax's Robozone* and *Electronic Arts' Cyberlight*.

Read all about it on page 25.

### 18 POWER!

In another ACE expose scenario, the top 50 players in the industry's power games are named.

### 22 ACE AT THE MOVIES

The beautiful people and Rick Haynes flocked to Cannes recently for the Film Festival and my! what a selection of titles there were on display. Imagine if they were turned into games...

### 25 ROBOWARS SPECIAL

*Cyberlight* and *Robozone* are robot games with a difference. *Robozone*, while opting for a more straightforward feel, promises all-out action blasting. *Cyberlight*, on the other hand features brand new graphics systems, build-em-yourself robots and a two-player punch-out option. Which will triumph?

### 32 LASEROISK REVENGE!

And you thought the *Laserdisk* was dead? Wrong! Read about this incredible new twist on technology and enter our free competition.

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Real-life laser combat comes to Manchester.

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We report from this year's computer trade show where the Industry folk have been deciding what you'll be playing this Christmas.

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Strictly for pixophiles, this report from the recent graphics show in Monte Carlo will simply stun you!

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The latest news of wdgts, gizmos and events on the hardware scene.

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Speak out!

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Solutions, codes, cheats and hints for the best games of the moment.

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Far be it from us to blow our own, or your, trumpet, but the next issue will be rather special.

JULY 1991



# PLAYER Manager 2

by Dino Dini

**PLAYER MANAGER 2 IS EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED AT THE END OF THE YEAR OR EARLY NEXT YEAR.**

Many thanks for the support and constructive criticism that so many of you extended to our products. Player Manager remains to date perhaps the only real time soccer management game. Now Dino is busy writing Player Manager 2 and the draft specifications are detailed below. If you have any suggestions that would enhance the depth or playability of the Player Manager 2, please write to us.

- One M. byte minimum memory. An additional disk drive may also be required.
- Full implementation of KICK OFF 2 and FINAL WHISTLE wherever possible. A double tactics editor will also be included.
- Three division leagues with 64 teams. Two Domestic and two European Cup Competitions.
- A young player must be nursed to the first team place otherwise he may burn out quickly.
- Numerous factors can cause player stress which will play a very important part in his individual match performance.
- Captain appointment. Man of the match, Manager of the month and the year awards.
- Manager performance to be put under tighter scrutiny, i.e. failure to get promotion after a while or maintain the position at the top may lead to being sacked.
- Introduction of some really astute and high spending computer managers. A Player Manager may also get an offer to manage another team in the league.
- Facility to see the stats. of every player in the league and on the transfer market. Only transfer listed players will have price indication.
- Option to bid for a player not transfer listed and overseas players. Introduction of Scouts.
- Much improved match report with information on scoring attempts, keeper saves & possession in each half of the match.
- International caps awarded and also compulsory retirement of players reaching maturity.
- Improved financial structure. Multi-players option.
- Improved coaching with facility to concentrate on an individual player.
- Invisible management stats influenced by individual player and team performance.
- Referees, pitches and wind may be implemented. Pre-season friendlies.

- Enhanced graphics or facility to edit player names. Both of these take up too much memory.

Each letter received until 15th July 1991 will go into a draw. First 10 letters drawn will receive an autographed copy of Player Manager 2 and next 10 letters drawn will receive £10 record tokens.

Now is your chance to help us create a game you want. Take it and you may also win a prize.

Please address the envelope to the address below:

# ANCO

PLAYER MANAGER 2, ANCO SOFTWARE LTD.,  
UNIT 7 MILLSIDE IND. ESTATE, LAWSON ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT, DA1 5BH

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# NEWS GAMES

Capcom claims there are nearly 230 developers in the USA and Europe creating software for the recently launched CDTV. The manufacturer is predicting sales of 80,000 machines in the US alone during the first year of release.

## Spurs wins the FA Cup and Rik Haynes gets hooked on bionic baseball...

### Chohmakaimura

You may not recognise this Japanese name but we bet the pica ring a bell. Since then, Capcom is working on another action game with ghosts, goblins and ghouls. Only this time, the Japanese company's efforts are purely being directed towards the Nintendo Super Famicom. Video games' favourite knight, who has a habit of losing his

armour, is back in another adventure! The scenario goes like this.

People are living in peace after the disastrous Great Fire four years ago. The war-torn castles are all but rebuilt and the town centre is a hive of activity. However, their happiness comes to an abrupt end as they sustain a fierce attack from a monster family in the sky. Innocent citizens are killed and the Princess is trapped. The kingdom awaits the chance to again get drunk on the great wine of peace. Taking the role of Asha you have three chances

to put things right and destroy the monster's world. Chohmakaimura will be available in August for the quest-drenching sum of ¥8,500 (approximately £34). An early pre-production preview of the game received a huge thumbs-up from visitors to the first Super Famicom Show in Tokyo last month.



cheats: it's goblins make their way in the Super Famicom. Special thanks to Virgin Interactive of Probe Software for supplying the visuals. Good luck with Amos!

## Amnios

A Big Nasty thing is living in space, eating everything that it comes across. Some brainy people built an army to fight the Big Nasty. The army kicked butt. The army's little ships went from planet to planet trying to kill the Big Nasty. If this sounds like another scenario for a shoot-'em-up, don't worry, it is!

Amnios is as 'explosive encounter with ten living planets of the worst kind' asserts publisher Psygnosis. The game has been coded by Pete Lyons and Paul Frawin, two ex-Microdeal veterans previously responsible for such titles as *Goldrunner*, *Leatherneck* and *Tetra Quest*. You'll be able to meet the Big Nasty next month on Amiga.

## Player Manager

Fresh from the chart-busting success of the *Final Whistle*, Dino Dini and Anco are hard at work on the sequel to *Player Manager*. Anco's boss Anil Gupta has set his sights high for *Player Manager 2*, saying "I want to give people a game that will stand the test of time. I want them to say, 'Yes, this is the definitive football management game'."

To help them achieve their daunting task, the guys are looking for innovative ideas to inject into the game from experts in the field - that's you my friend! Anco isn't simply looking for any cosmetic changes to *Player Manager*, Dino Dini wants hard gameplay ideas.

"We are improving the finesse of it," remarks Gupta. "We're going for a mmb player option where at least two players can play simultaneously. People can bid for each other's players and European teams will be playing as well. It's all compressed into three divisions. You must nurse your players properly otherwise they will just burn out. You also need experienced players to support the novices."

"We've learnt so much from *Player Manager*, what all the failings were. The flair of the player will be important and cost you a lot of money. Managers will be strictly monitored, you could be sacked for a poor performance."

The only bad news is that *Player Manager 2* requires 1MB of memory and extra disk drive. At least there will be a full implementation of *Kick Off 2* wherever possible.

For more details of how you can get involved in football simulation history, see the special advert found elsewhere in this issue or call Anco on 0322 292513.

Remember football is a game with two halves and the team with the most goals wins! By the way, *Kick Off 3* may be in time for the European Championships next year...



'Looks like the only option left for Games!'

## Lotus Turbo Challenge 2

Get your motor running because Gremlin is readying the eagerly-awaited follow-up to the racing *Lotus Turbo Challenge*.

You can drive both a Lotus Esprit Turbo SE and a Elan Turbo SE depending on which stage you're on. The sporty Elan made history in 1962 when Lotus created a car that became a leader for a generation. Then, 25 years later, the designers went back to their drawing boards - or CAD packages - to create a compact, two-seater sports car. "You have never driven a car like the Elan because there has never been a car like it," proclaims Lotus.

Instead of the truck-based play of the original, *Lotus Turbo Challenge 2* is divided into individual stages which will also include selectable routes and different roadside objects and tunnels. Test drivers can try their luck in November







# Strike Command

Far in the future, the public's thirst for violent sport has resulted in whole planetary systems being turned into combat arenas. Top human and alien pilots compete in a series of high speed, high death rate duels, with only the most skilled and cunning warriors standing a chance of winning the championship.

Written by the same team responsible for Millennium's earlier flight 'n' flight hit *ThunderStrike*, *Strike Command* employs a similar trailing camera viewpoint of the solid-3D action, but has an even higher death and destruction quotient thanks to the ability to buy a huge range of weapons and ship upgrades with cash won in the arenas. Can you make the grade as the Universe's top game? Find out when *Strike Command* hits



Imagine the Death Star wrecks but a thousand times deadlier and you'll get some idea of what you'll experience in this huge first arena game.



This is how the STRIKE Command arena looks in the game.

The creators of the HeroQuest boardgame have developed Space Crusade, another role-playing epic, this time set in space. Your space marines kick the ass of alien hordes aboard giant space ships. Available on all formats in November courtesy of Games.

## Base Wars

What do you get when you mix baseball with bionics? The latest in Ultra Games' Cyber Stadium Series. In *Base Wars*, the baseball heroes really are made of metal. Hunkering mechanical he-men resembling humans, half-ton tanks and unidentified fielding objects. And they're programmed to pound, punch and blast it out for base possession. Ouch.

This is a whole new brawl game. Select your bionic ball clubs, set the robot rosters, and go circuit to circuit in single games or a tortuous 10 game pennant chase.

Beat, cut, thrust, kick, spin to attack or engage the special combination attack sequence. Just remember you have to play ball as well! And don't forget to duck when the shrapnel starts flying. If the bottles get too brutal, just save the teams and stats for

another day. Fortunately, you can cash in your Cyber League winnings for parts, repairs and a wild assortment of metal-mashing weapons. Rexy the Rover is waiting for you in the parts shop. There are four different models of mechanical maulers, each with specialised circuitry for playing a specific position. Choose from 22 different protective and offensive items including Iron gloves, hyper engines, laser swords and more. Will *Base Wars* become the world's favourite bosh-time?



## Choplifter II

Not many shoot 'em-ups can claim a link to real life. *Choplifter* is a notable exception.

The failed attempt by American Special Forces to rescue the US hostages held in Iran during 1980 prompted Broderbund Software to release a game where the player not only had to blast away enemy tanks and planes, they also had to liberate and evacuate little people held prisoner in American embassies. *Choplifter* became an instant hit on the first wave of home microcomputers like the Apple II and Atari 800. Soon it was regarded a classic. Now JVC Musical Industries in Japan has revealed the Gameboy adaption of *Choplifter*.

An epic 15-stage romp, *Choplifter II* is available today for \$3,400 (£13.60). The world is still in a war-torn condition. The environment is getting worse every day. Now, pursued by world-wide destruction, the most urgent task has become the speedy rescue of prisoners of war. You must find the prisoners who can be taken and revive them. With the most accurate weaponry and the latest in attack helicopters, the AH90 Comanche, you fly over extremely dangerous places like dense jungle and heaving seas. For the mission you have Name-throwers and missiles in order to increase your strike capability. However, reigned against you

Feminists and good taste beware! These programming parades at Stern Game-Lux are devised yet another sleek Leisure Suit Larry game.

Even worse, the next title will be Leisure Suit Larry 5. As what's happened to 44? "At the end of Leisure Suit Larry 3, he supposedly lost his memory, so he's trying to find out what happened in Leisure Suit Larry 4," indicates Peter Jones at Stern Game-Lux. "It will be an absolute monster product."

PC players should look out for it later in the year - along with the sequel in 3D version. ACE will have more in the next issue.



## The Secret of Monkey Island

You can't keep a bad ghost pirate down. The Evil Ghost Pirate LeChuck was apparently only slightly fazed by that battle of root beer in the first game, so he's about to make a comeback later this year in *The Secret of Monkey Island II*. Lucasfilm Games and US Gold reckon the pirate specter is really mod now and out for revenge.

*The Secret of Monkey Island* was a hugely successful graphic adventure much admired by fans of the genre. Its story focused on an aspiring pirate, Guybrush Threepwood, who sets out to find his fortune among brash buccaneers, voodoo priestesses and murderous ghosts. This release had many Interface refinements to Lucasfilm Games' game engine, and incorporated scaling 3D animation and other special visual effects. Thinking of 1992 - and all that - Lucasfilm Games even produced versions of the text in German, French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Swedish and Finnish. Japanese, Chinese and Korean gamers also have the chance to solve the devilish secret.





NEWSGAMES

#### DEFENDERS OF DYNASTION CITY

Watch out! Supermen here comes Jet Ronastown. This action-age supergame could cause your console to melt down. Defenders of Dynastion City: The latest video game from Lucasfilm Games and JVC Music Industries, introduces the wildest bunch of super heroes ever seen. Dynastion City looks a lot like New York during the 1940s... except that it's the site of the world's first atomic-powered smoggy landfill plant. What better place for the hero from its inside the Mayhem and his bunch of villainous bruders?

Fans of the French poster *Shogun* from Loris... should be happy to hear the game is now available on the Sega Gamegear handheld console courtesy of Victor Musical Industries in Japan. This one may not utilize the bright colorful graphics of the Gamegear to the full. Shogun costs \$3.800 (about \$15).

## The Little Mermaid

Under the sea no-one can hear you scream. Based on the recent animated feature film from The Walt Disney Studios, which in turn was inspired by a popular East European fable, *The Little Mermaid* has been set into silicon by Capcom in Japan.

This love story tells the tale of a pretty mermaid who, after saving a handsome prince from drowning, trades her voice for legs. In order to start nagging him, she needs to get that big screen kiss from the bashful bachelor. Like the movie, the video game is full of cute characters and gameplay. It certainly makes a change from all those megadeath beat 'em-ups currently playing on most consoles. Keep a special eye out for the cool cojnn Crayfish. *The Little Mermaid* is out next month on NES for ¥5,800 (around £23.50), more versions are likely a follow later in the year.

## Floor 13

What a Le Carre on Floor 13, a game of subterfuge and corruption in high places, puts the player in the hot seat of an ultra-secret Government agency known only to the PM and a handful of ministers. The agency's job is to keep the Government high in the polls by covering up damaging scandals and 'eliminating' anti-Government voices.

*Floor 13* mixes Le Carre style intrigues with resources management gameplay to create an absorbing and refreshingly cynical atmosphere of moral ambiguity and double dealing. Written by David Eastman with graphics by Carl Comley, both of Conflict fame, the game features a impressive plot driver that can keep track of up to 100 unrelated scenarios. Aimed squarely at the 'mature' player, *Floor 13* is due from Virgin this September. Definitely one to watch - while watching your back!



## Rockman World

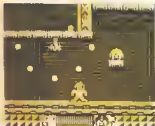
By popular request, Capcom is bringing its favorite character to Gameboy for the second time. *Rockman World* is a two megabit cartridge with our spaceman up against more Mad Doctors and rebel robots on to rule the universe. Poor Megaman can't count on the help of his robotdog Rush in this doredevil sequel.

Capcom has sold over one million copies of the *Megaman* series. Started back in 1982 by Kenzo Taniyama, a veteran of the Japanese video game industry and founder of Irem (producers of *R-Type*), Capcom is designer and marketer of games for home and coin-operated video arcade games. With over 240 game designers, the firm is ranked in the top three of more than 60 third-party licensees that design and market home video games for the NES and Gameboy.

In the past nine years, Capcom has given us *Commando*, *Ghost 'n Goblins*, 1942, *Bionic Commando*, *Street Fighter*, *Forgotten Worlds* and *Strider*. US Gold has experienced a long and fruitful relationship with Capcom by converting its games onto home computer.

Success, according to Capcom, lies in the company's ability to develop high quality video games that appeal to broad audiences and age groups. Another future direction is to bring its design skills to the USA. Currently Capcom has an American design team working with and studying the intricacies of game programming from the Japanese 'masters' in Osaka.

These digital daddies should help keep Capcom at the forefront of video game design.



Flag is coming from the town that created Lost Patrol for DOS. You must do battle to steal the flag from the next village and return it to your own abbode before they get your flag to their. Greenleaf suggests this game features a giant isometric-3D playing area. Out on Amiga 37 and PC in November.



Will this game light your fire?

## Faria

Only the bravest video warriors would enter Faria: The Land of Mystery and Danger. This RPG/adventure hybrid for the NES comes from Nexsoft Corporation, the American subsidiary of ASCII Corporation, publisher of LOGIN magazine in Japan.

"Action adventure gamers will thrive on the hack-sloshing fun of battling hundreds of monsters," expects Nexsoft. "This title is destined to set new ground in adventure gaming with a thrilling plot, along with over 70 different items, weapons, armour and magic."

Based in the Californian town of Cypress, Nexsoft has already released products ranging from the complex Wizardry RPG series to Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Christmas cards. Faria out, man.

If you're into athletics, you should be in sunny Sheffield from July 14-25 to enjoy the World Stadium games. There will be the most important days in the men's 200 year history. Contact 0142 720100 for more.



## Civilisation

From the co-founder of Microprose, Civilisation appears to be Sid Meier's answer to the award-winning Populous and Powermonger strategy games from Bullfrog and Electronic Arts. This reversed game designing genius even made Train Spotting trendy with Railroad Tycoon, so great things are expected for this ramble through the ages.

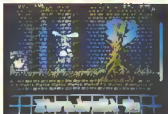
It all begins back in 4000 BC, you must develop an entire civilisation from a small nomadic tribe, balancing such issues as economics, politics and defence. The playing area is set on a map of the real world or in new terrain on a computer-generated area. A game may be played in its entirety for five to six thousand years or for a specific 100 year period. Along the way you'll encounter historical figures such as Napoleon or Genghis Khan. A novel Chitlopedia in Incorporated, giving definitions and illustrations of the terms and concepts used throughout the game. Civilisation is scheduled for an autumn release on IBM PC-compatibles for the princely sum of £39.95, all major graphics and sound boards will be supported.

## Program For Jesus

Evangelsoft of Kingston have launched a programming competition to find the Best Christian Software Writers of 1991. The firm, dedicated to spreading the Good Word through 'Christian computer games for Church and family', are offering prizes for the best examples of holy coding across a number of age ranges, on all popular machines. All manners of software will be eligible for entry, although shoot-em ups will probably be dimly viewed.

Please don't send your entries to ACE. Instead, mail them to: The Bible Software Competition, Evangelsoft,

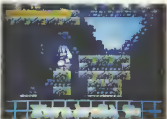
Since details have emerged about the new Indiana Jones game currently in development in the States, Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis is the first truly adventure designed originally for the personal computer rather than the reverse. Everyone's favourite professor is in a world-wide race with the Nazis to discover whether the mythical lost city of Atlantis exists and what powerful magic it protects. More next month.



## Fire and Ice

Remember Pugsy? Graftgold obviously do, because the hero of their forthcoming platform escapade bears an uncanny resemblance to the adorable canine star of the Betty Boop cartoons. Some scurrious dog... etc... person has kidnapped a litter of puppies and it's up to the floppy-eared cutesy to rescue them. Armed only with the ability to spit ice cubes, this epic quest takes the doredevil doggie from his icy homeland through eight multidirectionally-scrolling levels to a final battle with an arch baddy on a volcanic vista of lava and pumice.

Fire and Ice is being written by Graftgold's in-house code supreme Andrew Graybrook (responsible for such recent classics as Rainbow Islands and Faradroid 90) and looks unlikely to damage his reputation as a creator of finest-quality software. Could this be the game to knock Mono from his pedestal? Find out when the Fire and Ice is released this Winter by Microsoft.

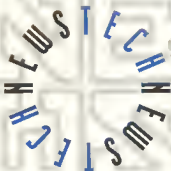


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## The Doors get digital as Rik Haynes ventures into freespace...

# Beyond The Stars

Do you fancy yourself as the next Luke Skywalker? LucasArts Entertainment Company launched a thrilling theme park ride in Tokyo last month that puts even the Star Wars movies to shame!

UCC StarPort 2045 is the latest brainchild of George Lucas, the movie genius behind the Star Wars trilogy. For £1,800 (the equivalent of £6.50) space adventurers get the computer-generated ride of their lives. A spokesperson says it's a 'Hyperspace Experience'.

Details are scarce, but StarPort uses something called 3D Scope graphics and Lucasfilm's THX sound system to produce stereo sounds better than most cinemas. Some of the amazing visuals were created by LucasArt's Industrial Light & Magic, the Oscar-winning movie special effects team. No European launch for StarPort is planned at present.

Electro (1921 625 3388) has released a new range of accessories for the Commodore including the 1600000 (C11 99) and GameLight (C9 99) lightproject allowing you to play in the dark, amplifier with integral speakers (C13 99) 'Magister' (C7 99) for poor sighted gamers, and 'Rigour design' computer (C12 99).



Legendary movie production house ILM is now getting into theme park rides. Will video games be next? Pic courtesy of UCC/ILM cooperation.

## Liquid Crystal Clothes

What's going to be the next fab thing to wear to your favourite nightclub? How about clothes that change colour with temperature? Groovy, baby.

British chemists at Merck have devised a heat sensitive liquid crystal ink which can be used in cyberfashion. Thermochromic clothes are a natural progression from Merck's 10-year research into this technology. It's even used on wine labels to show the correct temperature to serve champagne.

"The chameleon-like fabrics change in colour from black, right through the spectrum from red to violet as the clothes come into contact with either body heat or any external heat source," reveals Dr Martin Follat, Advanced Materials Business Manager for Merck's Industrial Chemicals Division.

ACE wonders what happens if you have sweaty armpits? Yuh!



## Holographic Time Travel

You could be in for a visual shock when you visit your local arcades thanks to Sega Enterprises, USA. This American subsidiary of the Japanese coin-op giant has developed a new video game system incorporating holographic graphics pulled off a laserdisc. The breathtaking 3D utilises a novel optical system licensed from a Southern Californian company specialising in holography.

Sega's premier Hologram game, *Time Traveller*, has you controlling the movements of real people instead of computer generated sprites. "Players will experience the illusion of dictating the script and storyline before their very eyes," promises Sega. You simply punch, shoot, jump and duck your way around a fantasy journey through time. *Time Traveller* will be followed by a whole series of Hologram games.

The whole concept unsurprisingly received a phenomenal reception at the recent ACME (American Coin Machine Exposition) in Las Vegas, especially since the cost of a Hologram coin-op is 'very reasonable' - whatever that means. Sega Europe hopes to start shipping the machine in mid-July.

Is Sega finally dragging coin-operated video games into the 21st century? Find out next month when ACE brings you an exclusive report from California and Japan. So watch this freespace! In the meantime, turn to page 32 and discover another laserdisc revelation...

## Master of Sounds

Why waste your time with third audio when you could boost your PC with del sounds? Oregon-based Covox, USA has designed and manufactured the specification-heavy Sound Master II soundboard.

"The new Sound Master provides the highest standards in sound quality and supports features that blows away anything else anywhere near its price range (£179.95 plus VAT)," asserts the unbiased President of Covox, Mark Stewart.

Sound Master II boasts full Ad-Lib compatibility, DMA digitiser with a high sampling rate, MIDI interface, internal speaker support and voice recognition software. It also comes complete with MIDI cables, speaker, digital graphics-based sound editor, direct-to-disk recording and playback software (for long sound files) and PC-Lyra, a music composing program. Contact Covox Europe on 0983 864674 for further details.





What is every wannabe city planner wearing this summer? A SimCity World Tour T-shirt of course! MasterCard also sells SimCity and SimEarth posters to enhance your play space. Get more details by writing to MasterCard, 953 Mountain View Drive, Suite 113, Lafayette, California 94549-3229 USA.

## Wired For Sound

British big screens will soon have equally impressive sounds to accompany the next Schwarzenegger blockbuster. Visitors to the West Thurrock UCI multiplex cinema in Essex are enjoying better quality film soundtracks than most West End London venues.

Oliver Stone's music-movie tribute to status band The Doors has been chosen to launch Kodak's Cinema Digital Sound (CDS) into Britain. This technically advanced sound system provides digital six-channel audio comparable to the results of compact disc recordings. The sixth channel has deep bass and special effects blasting out in all directions. A spokesperson claims CDS launches the outer limits of the human ear.

Punters can be fooled into thinking the movie is 'surrounding' them, thus creating an extra sense of realism. Perhaps listeners even believe the boozing Jim Morrison is puking-up right behind them during *The Doors* biopic?

Kodak spent two years developing CDS in conjunction with Optical Radiation Corporation of Azusa, California. Losers are used to actually 'digitise' optical soundtracks directly onto cellophane. Your local cinema needs to spend around £15,000 and a couple of days installing CDS. So far, European cinematic connoisseurs have had to travel to Brussels or Munich to break the sound barrier.



## Virus Attack Shirts!

So what exactly is a Virus Attack shirt?

Clothes for cyberpunks, we suppose. Over to designers Jo Simms and Elm Jackson at Flaw One for their explanation. 0000 ...

"We work with digital viral strains and unstable networking to positively contaminate art design data."

Hmm, yes. Jo and Elm claim they've been influenced by the dark landscapes and virus work of American artist Jean Sobleksi.

"Working with virus infected text and graphics and deliberately corrupted files, we let the viral strains run riot in our painting software. As a result, Flaw One designs are contaminated beyond recognition."

That's enough of this. If you're interested in Virus Attack Art or Retro ReVo Shirts contact Flaw One on 0225 312350. You'll even get a free leaflet with each shirt giving you news and more info on the 'cutting edge of techno-art'. Hurray.

## Be A Smarty Pants

How much do you really know about toys, then? Do you know what keeps a ten-year-old quiet or a baby bounce? Have you ever wondered which toys really help your child to learn or how to ensure the toys you buy are safe?

The answers could lie in 'A Parent's Guide to Learning Through Play' from Vtech Electronics, a toy company - surprise, surprise - that specialises in educational toys.

Vtech says the guide contains a wealth of information on the different stages in a child's development and how to choose the right toy for the right age. It also covers the difference between a seeming old and other toys and offers advice on toy safety from RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents).

Just send a SAE to Vtech at 'Learning Through Play', Vtech, PO Box 480, London SW9 9TH.

How old do you have to be before you can complete Super Mario Bros? Answers on a postcard to...



## Multimedia Visits Palm Springs

Following the agreement to create a multimedia standard for IBM PC-compatible computers, Tandy has unveiled a new range of MPC (Multimedia PC) machines.

The veteran American electronics maker and retailer launched its first MPC line-up at last month's Demo '91 conference in Palm Springs, California. Each Tandy MPC is equipped with a CDR-1000 internal CD-ROM drive, 512K Video RAM, audio circuitry, 3.5-inch floppy disk drive, mouse and multimedia extensions. You also get a minimum system (286 running at 16MHz, 2MB RAM and 40MB hard disk) costing \$2,599 right up to a deluxe \$5,499 model (33MHz 386, 4MB RAM, 105MB hard disk).

Tandy is also supplying internal and external CD-ROM players for \$799.95 and \$899.95 respectively. These upgrade kits supposedly convert a standard PC into an MPC.

Hopefully you'll be able to buy any MPC-software with the confidence of that it will run on your own set-up. Integrating digitised video, audio, graphics and text, multimedia software is becoming increasingly popular in the business, education and consumer sectors of computing. Numerous hardware and software

companies - including Sony, Philips, Matsushita and Fujitsu - believe multimedia is the next step forward in interactive entertainment. The potential is only beginning to be realised after many years of hype. We'll have to wait and see if it succeeds. MPC is a step forward but it could end up becoming the MSX of the nineties!

Tandy's first five MPC systems should be shipping in the States as you read this. The company has yet to announce price or availability details for Europe. Let's hope users don't have to wait too long, or pay too high a price, for the privilege of MPC 'reassurance'.



Set in the a "Maule fought be are the d any offer "behind t by elite vehicles. machine

Quest Software Manchester Tel: 6689

# BATTLE COMMAND



Set in the future, in which you control a "Mauler" Assault Tank in one of 16 missions, in a war fought between two dominant races of the New World. Such are the defensive capabilities of the opposing armies that any offensive moves must entail "behind the lines" actions performed by elite troops in specially designed vehicles. The Mauler is the latest such machine capable of being lifted in and

**FIRST INTO BATTLE** ...

out of hostile territory and armed with the most advanced weaponry. Select your mission and the armoury you will require. The 360 radar sweep, in and out of cockpit views and area maps showing terrain, and complete

**... LAST TO LEAVE**

theatre of operations, all combine to give a full picture of the battle as you strive for victory in a 3D arena where tactics go hand in hand with lightning reflexes and a true-grit determination  
**SPECTRUM-CDMMDDRE-AMSTRAD  
IBM/AMSTRAD PC & Compatibles  
ATARI ST-COM AMIGA**

**ocean**

Ocean Software Limited, 6 Central Street,  
Manchester, M2 5NS Telephone: 061 832 6633  
Telex: 669977 OCEANS G Fax: 061 834 0650

Turn a  
Bogey at two o'clock into an Eagle shot...

# GOLF

MicroProse flight sims have long  
been seen as the best in the field.  
Now we're using our technology to  
explore another dimension.

The rolling 3-D of the golf course  
topped with the options, gameplay  
and realism you've come to expect.

Others are golf games. This is for real.

**AMPRO STYLE**

Explore the dimensions of the game of  
golf with MicroProse's GOLF.

MicroStyle Entertainment Software is a division of MicroProse Simulation Software UK.

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# letters

Send your letters c/o Jim Douglas Priory Court, 30-32 Faringdon Lane, London, EC1 3AU.

## YOU SAID WHAT?!

Having read your article on Famicom Super Mario (issue 45), I have decided to write and offer my contribution to your thesis because I'm afraid I disagree. Ok, ok, so I'm letting myself wide open to mountains of criticism and hate mail, but I fail to see what the attraction is. I've got absolutely no intention of belittling the game's achievements.

It's obvious that a great deal of thought, care and attention has gone into the design and implementation of what many view as the ultimate Platform Game. Sonically it's fine, with some irritable music and excellent effects. Graphically, it's only OK, because it doesn't really stretch the machine's capabilities and although there are plenty of clever visual effects and gags, it's been done a lot better elsewhere (Megadrive Mickey and Sonic for example).

Varied gameplay is there in abundance with plenty of puzzles although the basic run/jump/head-butt/squash action runs throughout the entire length of the game. However I do agree that you need to adjust your approach to each level because of the various challenges that face you and this aspect should make it a game that you want to keep playing in order to achieve that elusive 'satisfaction factor'.

Doing fine so far aren't we? I've agreed with virtually everything you've said apart from two things - playability and addictiveness. Where did these two factors disappear to? I've had the game for four months now and have only managed to save 12 game positions! It has to be one of the most frustrating titles I own!

Whether it's down to my incompetence, or the confusing and relatively unresponsive control method, I don't know but one thing is for sure it's far from addictive! Many a joystick has been thrown against the monitor screen because the Italian phenomenon hasn't done what he was told, done something too late or not done it at all. I know I'm a good games player but why can't I get to grips with Mario?

I'm sure I'm not the only one who tears his hair out and screams uncontrollably after playing this game for ten minutes. Despite what you and many other magazines claim, this in my mind is not a playable or addictive game.

Just a final point, I read in a previous issue that Nintendo are so confident about Mario 4 that

they think it will sell the Famicom for them. That's probably true but only because the character is a legend in video game entertainment and, as we all know, names always sell. It's also rather underhanded of Nintendo to expect fans of the series to buy a brand new machine in order to play the new instalment.

Julian Roche  
Cheshire

Without wishing to nit-pick, your arguments are far from airtight. The fact that you can't get especially far in the game is neither here nor there. In fact achieving only 12 worlds in four months would seem to suggest some sort of arrested development. Unresponsive control? Perhaps you're joystick isn't connected properly, since we found the Mario's user interface as fast and friendly as any we've seen. And as for "Mario not doing what he was told?" Clans were set a-spring when we came upon that old chestnut.

I can't really see your gripe about forcing people to buy the Famicom to play Mario 4. For a start, there are other Mario games for every other Nintendo system. And after all, if you had to release every game on every format, simply to let everyone have a go, the game design would inevitably be aimed at the capabilities of the lowest machine, making it a pretty dull outing for top-end users.

Finally, your comment about names always selling suggests you're a bit confused. Mario's name has been built up from a series of successful video games, so why shouldn't his future titles sell? He is distinct from the real culprits utilising the names=sales adage, when rubbish games ride on the publicity of well known films. Next.

## PREMATURE EXCITEMENT

My brother and I own an Amiga 500 and have been eagerly awaiting the release of 4D Sports Boxing. Your magazine announced in its review that the release date was to be January 1991. So, once a week we ran down to our local software outlet. Sad, dejected and quasi-suicidal we trudged back home with our sates pocket money still intact.

Why oh why did you raise our hopes to such an enormous State of erect expectancy, only to make us walk limply home every Saturday unfulfilled. (You big tease!)

I eventually phoned up Mindscape who informed me that the release date was October 1991 despite the fact that your mag still carries the advert supporting a January 1991 release date!

Don't you think that with a game so lavishly praised by your magazine and so eagerly awaited by the public you should have written some kind of apology/announcement with regard to your hopelessly misguided information.

Please explain as my disillusionment with your magazine runs down on me like a B52 on a carpet bombing raid.

Andrew James Cookin  
Finchley

My, what an emotional fellow. 4D Boxing, at the time we reviewed the PC version was intended for an early 91 release on all formats. And although products as complex as Boxing often slip, it really isn't our place to apologise for soft cos missing their own release dates.

## 8-BIT OF WHAT YOU FANCY

I would just like to say that your coverage of virtual reality is very good. But I have noticed your lack of support for 8 Bit computers. There seems to be no machine specific columns for these computers anymore which is really a shame.

I enjoyed these columns, especially the Commodore 64 columns for its tips and cheats.

I have also noticed you seem to think that Turman 2 was only released on the ST and Amiga when in fact it has been out for some time on the 64, and it's totally brilliant. It has features like wonderfully smooth scrolling, very good graphics, parallax scrolling, excellent music and brilliant gameplay, so why haven't you reviewed it?

There have been no reviews for 8 bit computers for ages yet these computers are far from dead and gone. If you have ceased to support these extremely popular machines please say so, and please say why. I hope you have not because it would be foolish to do so so you need only to look at games such as Turman 2, Last Ninja 3 and Lotus Esprit to know why it would be foolish.

Jason Cooper,  
Barnes.

Sorry to disappoint you Jason, but we are no longer covering 8-Bit machines. We know there are plenty of excellent games still being written for the machines, but ACE's job is to look to the future and catch new trends. We just couldn't jus-



tly giving space to 8-bit machines which could be filled with information on the new computers and their software. However, we'd hope that all our 8-bit readers will return to ACE once they've upgraded.

## HARD, PINK

I'm a computer fanatic! I buy ACE every month, as well as C&VG and I always read them from cover to cover at least three times including all the adverts and all the pink pages! First from "Hard Sell" you should give the name of the shop that gives the best processor for what it has and its price.

I also think that you should add a new section on monitors, for instance the best quality, the best prices and where to get them from. I hope if you did it, it would be just like "HARD SELL" with the picture of it under its name. It would also be help to give its colour and quote its price and the best places to get it from.

For ACE readers page would be possible to under "FOR SALE" highlight what they're selling. Also, I have an Amstrad CPC 6128 and I can never find the software for it, can you help me if so please write.

Sorry to go on but I think that the pinks would be a lot more interesting with this & I would help me and a lot of others out.

James Malby  
Putney

You'll be pleased to know that the Pink Pages will be totally overhauled in the next couple of months. Readers with particular answers about pinks or suggestions as to what they'd like to see in the letters should drop us a line.

## ARE YOU FOR REAL?

In the last few months, your magazine has attempted to define the term 'Virtual Reality'. I think it might be best if you consider first what you are attempting to define so poetically. I believe that 'Virtual Reality' (used in its current sense) is a misnomer.

Let me explain by a list of what I believe is the major levels of Reality

1) Actual Reality - The Real World. Everything you see exists and everything you do affects this world. In other words you have direct interaction with the world on every level of every sense.

2) Alternate Reality - Another world which can either be extremely like our own, or completely different. But, like Actual Reality, everything we do and say affects this world.

3) Virtual (Actual) Reality - The simulated Real World. Our world simulated by some means (ie computers). This world is virtually like ours except for one thing; things we do don't directly affect the world, but merely via computer simulation.

lation

4) Virtual Alternate Reality - As above, only in a different 'world'.

5) Partial Reality. (Both Actual and Alternate) - A 'world' where only a section of the world is available to our senses and we have limited control over the objects in the world.

Computer games and dreams sit in level 5 Partial Reality. And this is where your so-called 'Virtual Reality' sits. The really good stuff may just be beginning to reach level 4. No-one has yet come close to level 3. No-one really believes in level 2 and no-one will ever reach level 1.

So, there you are, VR in a can

Peter Mehari

Phew! Thank goodness someone knows what they're talking about. We were just throwing around those phrases because we thought we'd look big and clever.

## BACK TO LIFE

I think that the secret of success in a computer game, no matter if it is an arcade or an adventure is the multiplayer element. No processor can supercede a human's mind and imagination so there is nothing more exciting than competing against one or more known or unknown persons with unexpected feelings and reactions.

No matter how far the game leads the player in its plot and action the addition of a human opponent or partner raises the interest and the gameplay straight up to the top.

Anyway multiplayer systems can be the answer to anyone who thinks that computer isolate the person from the out world.

Closing I would refer to an example to prove that a multiuser system brings life to a game; and that is life itself!

Because there isn't a multi user game more alive than life!

A Anastasakis

Very true. 'Hurray' for being alive

## DISK RESPECT

I read with astonishment in another magazine, *Amiga Power*, that nobody will now be allowed to place full-priced games on magazine covers.

Giving away free games was good for the consumer while it faster and probably benefited companies more than they dared let on.

For instance, it gave the readers a chance to play a good (albeit elderly) game, which having probably already been swallowed up by the competition and a batch of new releases, most people would not purchase at full price anyway.

Now, if companies saw magazines distributing copies of *Lemmings* or *Speedball 2*, which they wouldn't be allowed to do anyway, then this

## TV QUICK

Recently I had my attention drawn to the inexpressible absence of a computer games television program. Television is the ideal way to review games as a potential buyer could see the game in action without buying it or finding a friend who already has it. As a fan of most game genres, I own an Amstrad PCW, Compaq PC and a Game Boy, and would love to have the opportunity of really seeing what a game is like before I commit myself to a purchase. Although the reviews in magazines are reasonable, they are woefully inadequate when compared to what they could be if there was a dedicated TV program.

It would be possible to see the graphics first hand instead of having to squint at small, inanimate screen shots. You would be able to hear the music and sound effects without notes on playability, lastability and other subjective views could be relayed to the watched via a window display such as one used on ITVs Chart Show.

This would not signal the end for computer magazines, however. True, reviews based magazines would obviously suffer but quality publications such as ACE which has a high

would be serious cause for complaint. I have always felt that some major companies produce too many games then they know what to do with anyway. However, would these companies compromise if the following guidelines were used.

1) The magazine pays a fee to the company for the loan of its game.

2) The magazine pays all the disk duplication costs.

3) Increasing its coverprice by about £1, the magazine includes the game.

4) For each magazine sale, 50 pence (half its increased price) is handed over to the company as royalties for using its game.

5) The magazine undertakes not to have more than 4 full-priced games on its cover disk per year.

Knowing little about magazine budgets, I'm not sure what hidden implications would also be included. It may be that my idea will not be considered after all.

One alternative would be to follow in the footsteps of the new magazine *Amiga Fun* by distributing previously unreleased games.

Admittedly, I've never purchased this magazine so I don't know if it's any good.

If a game hasn't been commercially released, is it possible for it to be stopped from being used as a magazine cover story?

If so, it looks as if everyone will be stuck with playing demos of the new releases which, in turn, only help to keep the companies with old walleys.

Stuart N Hardy  
Sheffield



enough proportion of articles concerning virtual reality and other technological innovations would continue to do well. I myself used to buy ACE, G&G, Mean Machines, PC World and Games X, but I realised that the amount of duplicated material in them was so great that I eventually had to wean myself down to ACE and PC World. Are there any plan to fill the gap which clearly exists? I would like to know what the industry as a whole thinks of this

Mark Kennedy  
Shpley, West Yorks.

Far from meixplicable, the absence of a TV computer-games show is entirely understandable. The battle for TV ratings is severe, so limiting the potential number of viewers to a show by only covering items which will interest computer owners is a dangerous move. When reading a computer magazine, it's unlikely that you'll be particularly interested in reviews of games which aren't on your machine, so imagine how

boring it would be for people who have no interest at all. A 26 minute program wouldn't be able to touch on the depth of games in the way that magazines can. And what happens if you want to go back and refer to a review at a later date?

The results of trying to cover all bases with programs which educate Joe Public about computer games while informing the existing users have all fallen on their faces, and although a Chart Show variant would seem to be the best option at the moment, the non-human aspect of the subject matter makes it very difficult for casual viewers to be interested.

However, the sort of showweel sampling of graphics and sound you talk about is available in WHSmiths, through in-store video promotions put together by software companies and Bulletin 1000. A monthly vid of the latest releases plays in the computer area of most Smiths stores. Although these are basically adverts and offer little objectivity, you do get to see the graphicsmove and hear the sound. Most offer a running commentary on the game's features.

The logical conclusion being that through their 'generosity' the mags would prevent anyone buying new games, the softcos would go broke, the mags would get no adverts and they would fold too. Gosh eh?

Finally, recent ELSPA meetings with magazine publishers Future, Newsweek and EMAP attending resulted in the decision to hell the free-games spiral once and for all.

And everyone lived happily ever after and went back to producing decent magazines instead of disk-holders. Ii only.

## STARRY, STARRY FIGHT

After reading your review of Star Control (issue 43, April, page 67) I feel I need to set some things straight. I realise the appreciation of a game is a rather subjective matter, but in this case I can hardly agree with the review.

Firstly it should be evident, even to the most ignorant computer gamer, that any comparison with games such as Elite and FoFT is totally out of order here. Star Control is no "spaceflight simulator", nor was it intended to be. Elite and FoFT rang in the same class as games like Wing Commander or Epic, Star Control, however, could best be compared with Archon and Archon II. For those who don't remember Archon, it's a strategy game: simulating the confrontation between the forces of good and those of evil. Both sides have mixed group of fantasy creatures, all with unique abilities at their disposal. The game takes place on a 2D board and where two opposing creatures meet, the

playing area is magnified to a full screen combat scene where battle ensues. Well, Star Control is a similar game, but set in an intergalactic stage where spacecraft instead of creatures meet.

Let me just say that the game is simply great fun, especially in two player mode. Science fiction fans will doubtlessly appreciate the refreshing and humorous descriptions of the different alien races and their spacecraft (partly described by the works of popular SF writers) and as an avid strategy fan I can assure you that the strategy element defining the strengths and weaknesses of each craft and using them appropriately is well implemented in the game. Graphics and sound are very good. I simply don't understand how your reviewer could make such a fuss over 'too small graphics'. This is simply part of the game system; to ensure the largest possible combat, ships are displayed small (indeed) and as soon as they come within close range of each other they are magnified to adequate size.

To me, this is a very well functioning solution, and it should be said that even in their smallest depiction, all graphics are still well defined and clearly visible.

I find it rather surprising that you complain about the lack of originality and real two-player games on the one hand, and then flatten a game like Star Control which meets up to both these demands on the other. Luckily I purchased the game before reading your review, because the sad truth is that I probably wouldn't have bought it at all after seeing your rating.

David Van Dyck  
Belgium.

Sorry you didn't like our review, David and pleased you're enjoying Star Control. Personally, I agree fully with Lawrence's review of the game, finding it neither exciting or enjoyable. However, many others here at EMAP have been singing the games praises. CU Amiga for example (just across the floor) do little else but play Star Control. Just goes to show that there's no accounting for taste.

## PLUMBING THE VERY DEPTHS

In issue 45 of ACE you said that Mano is a "pizza-man". What he really is is a plumber. That's why there are pipes in all of his games, and he wears a bib and braces.

Ben Dixon  
Bognor Regis

Sip of the finger rather than a misheard conception, Ben. However, the writer of the piece has been chastised.

Mick Richard Tidball backing him up. Europe looks to be at his feet. Strengths: Years in the arcade business have given Sega all manner of handy expertise allowing them not only to produce excellent hardware but up notch software as well. This is where Mi ikihara's European ascent is going to be a bit risky, then, his job Nintendo have before them.

Weaknesses: Betting in charge of the UK market would seem to be a prestigious position but Mi ikihara seems to be on his own to do a degree.

What To Watch For: Sega's bag of future goodies is certainly laden with a whole deal of great gadgetry that is bound to help Mi ikihara in his battle to the death against the mighty Nintendo. Look out for an incredibly powerful CD-ROM attachment for the Megadrive, a Megadrive modem and the long-awaited 32-bit Gradius.

#### DAVID WARD/JON WOODS

Job Title: Co-Owners. Current Software Status Report: Officially, Conan is still the top software house, with the awards and the market share to prove it. The usual story for this year: Mean bitches swapped up, product line diversified a little further, launched a 16-bit budget range. Filed. Dear Barrett:

Strengths: Ward is the original sage of the industry, and he knows more about what's what than most. So does Jon. Continuous stay, never cross swords with Woods or Ward. With the advent of a US office and increased Nintendo commitment. It shouldn't be too long before these guys get their own rounds and lighting bolts. Weaknesses: Marketing, advertising and image are sound, but the tie-in product occasionally disappoints. This race to secure the rights to dig movies before it's too late has led to such deals as not always ripe - remember Jaws? Conan's target of output - 5m units from the same company as Chase HQ. What To Watch For: The Simpsons. Terminator 2. Robocop 3. Maybe even a welcome return to some original product.

#### NEOFF BROWN

Job Title: Managing Director. US Gold Status Report: Signed Delphine games to good effect, with the second game due next. Contained to do friends with Sega. A string of average lineered slides and very little else.

Strengths: Master affable. Likes to put in appearances and have a active involvement in press-baiting, unlike certain other soul-faced company bosses we would mention. Knows how to sign a licence.

Weaknesses: Even more self-inflating than even Rarely seen at anything, but the most fashionable parties. The last two releases, *Line of Fire* and *ESNAK* were mediocre, and Geoff would do well to stop him not. Hopefully high-end affiliate labels Lucasfilm and Grimsgrace can do something to bolster the firm's image. Needs to get some quality product out there - and fast.

What To Watch For: BIG DEALS in the pipeline. Has Geoff got a late summer blockbuster up his sleeve?

#### GREG FISHNACH

Job Title: Managing Director. Acclaim Status Report: Acclaim may not be a name with household familiarity though. Get out. Scorpions isn't but Nintendo grows in Europe. Acclaim will go with them. Acclaim are possibly the most important state-side Nintendo publishers with a large and successful range of licensed products. 1991 saw the release of many mega hits including *Puncher* and *The Simpsons*.

Strengths: With more oily than ketchup, if Greg wants something he buys it, no messing.

Weaknesses: Descriptions of some of games through review malpractice. Acclaim are often let down on the quality side through sub contracting to inferior development companies. Greg really should take a personal interest in this aspect of his business as punters won't follow down on hamburgers forever when other companies are offering dainties.

What To Watch For: On the grapevine are rumours of internal instability though these stories roots are likely to be in the jealous chatter of rivals rather than good hard truth. Let's see how it goes.

#### STEVE FRANKLIN

Job Title: Managing Director. Commodore UK.

Status Report: This last year has seen the Amiga firmly establish itself as the definitive 16-bit home computer. Currently involved with the CDTV launch. Steve's got his hands more than full. Strengths: With a reputation for never mincing his words or suffering losses gladly. Mi Franklin is not a man to mess with. Steve is probably the most physically scary man in the company world. Let a rage is rumoured in the heat. Harebell. Let's look like that. Bang in the heat.

Weaknesses: There was the Commodore GS - a garish looking machine with a slight y dino-esque feel to it. Merely a CGA with no keyboard. punters kept well clear of it for their dummies.

What To Watch For: CDTV, gold at the end of rainbow or another marketing nightmare? The coming year will tell.

#### JOHN TRAMIEL

Job Title: Mr Atari.

Status Report: Not a very exciting year for Atari, but only real highlights being the newly launched TT. *3D Max* of Super ST which this world just yawned at. Strengths: Originally held honcho at Commodore. Jack is not a man to take trouble lightly. "Do it my way or watch your butt" says Jack in not so many words and when you're running a high flying hardware company that might be the best way to keep things in order.

Weaknesses: Like it or not, the Atari ST is in decline nowadays and it looks like a trend that's set to continue. Instead of responding to this customer rejection of his current hardware with bonuses new computers Jack'll stick to his guns to the grin end.

What To Watch For: There's the Panther coming up in this very near future which if anything like the machine Atari are rumoured to have created, will be truly awesome.



#### NON JUOY

Job Title: Head of Nintendo Europe Status Report: It's BOOOM time for Nintendo in Europe. Everything is on the run and up as Enix sprints the continent over gobbin up all manner of Mario merchandising.

Strengths: It's taken a while but Ron Judy's appointment of Bardas as distributor has the NES heading for the continent. Who'll want the dominant market there between Nintendo and Sega, no one knows but the huge loadings of cash available to Mr Judy couldn't be so seriously lack-ast.

Weaknesses: Few displayed as yet. What To Watch For: The Super Famicom the Hilly Grail of the console world, eagerly hoisted over anyone who picked up a company mag in the last six months. It's a long way off before it appears in Europe, but if and when they launch, it will demolish the competition.

#### MR ISHIHARA

Job Title: Head of Sega UK.

Status Report: Instrumental in launching the deal Virgin/Sega European marketing deal. Mi ikihara has help to get up a lean, mean selling machine. And with his ex-USG side



David Ward's World Ward (left) and Neoff's Ben Stuart's battle for the marketplace. (Above) Marzocchi's Peter Elliott.

(Below) Electronic Arts' Mark Lewis.



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**Getting a hit game on the streets in today's cut-throat software market is no job for Mr Fainthearted. So just who are the real movers and shakers in the games industry today? Who are the men and women who have the power to dictate which games you play? In a no-holds barred ACE report, we name the top 50 industry string pullers and assess their recent performance. By Gary Whitta and Gary Liddon**

# EXTREME

## MARR LEWIS

**Job Title:** Managing Director, Electronic Arts Ltd  
**Status Report:** *PowerMonger* was a good year's software highlight for Mark. In the first month it sold more copies than *Populous* has to date! Negotiated a hefty deal to become the country's first fully licensed Sega MegaDrive developer/publisher and added a few more Sineside software labels.

**Strengths:** Being American is a distinct advantage over here. Euro businessmen go all wool at the knees when they hear that accent. Well educated. Yale University graduate. Monitored his industry presence at the Year of the Computer Arena conference. Looks good in casual clothes.

**Weaknesses:** Tends to be too optimistic. Needs to learn more about the global marketplace by his own admission. Doesn't get out and about as much as he'd like.

**What To Watch For:** Some very big deals going down soon...

## PETER RILOTTA

**Job Title:** Managing Director, Miramax  
**Status Report:** *TURBO* Misunderstood the biggest licensing coup the industry has ever seen. The game went on to become the biggest seller of all time. Lost the *Straw Hat* brothers to Renegade and the lullaby of the *Conan* label is now an urban area the company's crash. Successfully launched Mirror Image budget label.

**Strengths:** Never one to pussyfoot around, whether it's his own stall or when dealing with other firms. Good contacts and industry know how has helped

him restate Miramax's image as a quality publisher. An all round good guy. **Weaknesses:** After *Turtles*, *Idiot's* may have been bitten by the licence bug. A string of mediocrities such as *Back To The Future II* and *III* and *Prodigy 2* haven't helped matters much. Now we have *Alien 3*, *Turtles 2* and *Conan Heat* on the way. Must be careful of this sort of thing if Image Works is not to turn into just a convenience library.

**What To Watch For:** The first games from Acme Interactive. Bob Jacob's new company, to arrive through Miramax's *Turtles 2*.

## IAN STEWART

**Job Title:** Managing Director, Gremlin  
**Status Report:** A good year that seems to have depended on racing games - *Super Cars*, *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge*, *Tamagotchi* and *Toyota Celica Rally* have all done well. *Super Cars 2* looks to do the same.

**Strengths:** You don't survive in the business as long as Ian has without doing something right - he invented *Monty Mole*, you know. At moment, Ian looks as if he can do no wrong, and the days of Jack the Nipper and *MASK* are well behind him.

**Weaknesses:** Wholesale belief in his product range means bad reviews weigh heavily on Ian's shoulders. There are only so many car firms to tie racing games to, and Ian's running out. *Skoda Favorit Turbo Rally* just doesn't seem like a viable proposition.

**What To Watch For:** The big board game licence *Hero Quest*, and the other Gremlin has a lot riding. *Seibohab 2*, *Impossible* on the PC Engine.

## GEOFF HEATH

**Job Title:** European Director, Mediascape International  
**Status Report:** Signed a distributive deal with Renegade. Successfully negotiated raid on high-ranking Ocean staff - poaching Pam Griffiths and Colin Scales in one fell swoop. Gave Phil Harrison a Sierra Cosworth.

**Strengths:** The ultimate businessman, has been around longer than time itself. Mr Shrewd. Classy corporate image, impeccable US contacts. Godlike of credibility, very well respected worldwide.

**Weaknesses:** Tendency to continually hobnob with Si inside YYYV's makes him inaccessible to the lower orders most of the time. Corporate image is still too stuffy to get the prettier interested - a little bit of *Evening* ep would do the world a good. **What To Watch For:** That little bit of *Evening* ep, perhaps from the *Straps*?

## IAN HETHENINGTON

### /JONATHAN ELLIS

**Job Title:** Joint Managing Directors, Pygmy  
**Status Report:** *Leominster 2* and *Best 2* were the high spots of an otherwise dull year. *Kilgus Game Show*, *Inferno*, *Anarchy* were all average. *Anonymous* was anything but. Signed a big money deal with Ocean to put *Leominster* on cassette.

**Strengths:** Somehow manage to retain good punter perception despite releasing flashily packaged, not-of-the-mill games. Made a fortune out of *Leominster* - but, three again, who would it have? **20**

**What To Watch For:** *Pygmy* and *Jonathan Ellis*. *Straps* (right). Ocean's *Gary Drury* is a man who made the software business. *Jonathan Ellis* (right). *Pygmy* and *Jonathan Ellis* (right).





continued

**Weaknesses:** Programmers perhaps don't get recognition they deserve: did you know DMA Design did *Leisure*? Jan is occasionally over precious attitude to his product can cause friction.  
**What To Watch For:** Apparent animosity in multi-media CD market.

#### FRANK HERMAN

**Job Title:** Deputy MD of Virgin Mastertronic  
**Status Report:** As the men that made Mastertronic before selling it off to Virgin, Frank has a long and prestigious history in the software industry. At the moment he spends a lot of time in negotiation with Sega hoping to sort out the day-to-day details of their business relationship. Strengths: Frank's a man from the tough but let's world of business practice whose ability to beat a trader makes him someone who should not be crossed. He has a reputation for tough negotiation tactics and it certainly seems to get results.  
**Weaknesses:** An explosive temper. Frank plays close to the line and he is probably crossed at once or twice.  
**What To Watch For:** Getting on a bit now Frank must be looking forward to retirement so maybe they year will see him bin finishing off his days with the Mastertronic name he was so instrumental in creating.

#### ALAN SKARHAM

**What To Watch For:** Sales Manager, Virgin Mastertronic.  
**Status Report:** Continuing in his successful Sega involvement. Alan has worked hard to establish the Sega console as the definitive game machines for Europe. Strengths: Very good salesman if he has a lead for the product and with Sega he's done wonders.  
**Weaknesses:** With a propensity for hesitation Alan refuses to be put on the spot. Favourite phrase is "rhhhhhhhh".  
**What To Watch For:** Any kind of instant commitment to anything else.

#### DAVID BRACEY

**Job Title:** Software Director, Ocean.  
**Status Report:** Recent promotion from Software Manager to Software Director promises rights to three with the bagpipes but so far the only practical aspect of the directorship seems to be that it's now more difficult than ever to get him on the phone. Over the last year he has become more involved with Ocean's licence buying operation, and helped set up the company's US office.  
**Strengths:** A true industry veteran, Bracey's got all the connections that

court. Level-headed too. Not quite as accessible as he used to be, but still one of the best when it comes to showing people that need thorough Weaknesses: Gary has his work cut out for him if he is ever critical of Ocean (his *Robo-Jand Terminator 2* from the licence-jacked press. However, new gamesies in both titles are promised.

**What To Watch For:** Bracey masterminded the Ocean's assault on the Super FamCom CD market.

#### ASH TAYLOR

**Job Title:** Managing Director, Leisuresoft.  
**Status Report:** Ash's cunning know-how has turned Leisuresoft into the largest software distributor in UK breaking former giants Centrisoft and the Top Strengths: A round businessman with a good eye for talent giving Leisuresoft a competent and efficient staff. Good management skills.  
**Weaknesses:** Tendency to blow hot and cold can often leave colleagues confused. Ash's short temper coupled with his lack of care about who he upsets makes him a somewhat controversial character.  
**What To Watch For:** The next few years will see the continued expansion of Leisuresoft into European territories. Look out Fritz and Marcel, the Brits are coming!

#### NOO COUSINS

**Job Title:** Head Honcho, Activision UK.  
**Status Report:** A year of meditation and meditation posturing has one of the industry's top stewards. After the big blow in the form of the demise of Activision, a period of limbo ensued (what was he doing on that Damark Christmas card?) Now in the helm of big-time US Nintendo publisher Activision's UK office. Strengths: Has been around long enough to know what's what. Impeccable list of contacts, and enviable industry knowledge. Nice suits.  
**Weaknesses:** The Activision crash and ensuing limbo period inevitably lost Rod lots of that hard-earned kudos.  
**What To Watch For:** Rod getting up Activision for an Activision style success story.

#### FERGUS MCGOVIN

**Job Title:** Head Honcho, Probe Software.  
**Status Report:** Probe have always the ubiquitous ones and this year alone he's seen *Back To Future II*, *Darius*, *Universe* and the indelicately saleable *Turibles* enter Probe's bibliography. Publishers are clamouring to get a bit of Fergus in their product line.  
**Strengths:** Currently rumoured to be moving over to million a year, Probe have been on a steep and steady climb to strategic heights since Fergus jacked in publishing games to concentrate on developing them for other people. Fergus' no nonsense approach has earned an almost iron rule of the world's most powerful boardrooms. Getting work isn't a problem for Fergus: but how much can one man oversee?  
**Weaknesses:** Probe has a peculiar reputation. Adored by the satirists, but his Press rep isn't too hot. Since although his rules set by the backdoor, the innovation side could do with some work.

**What To Watch For:** Wire Probe afforded a wider level, perhaps some originality would be allowed to shine through.

#### TOM WATSON

**Job Title:** Director, Renegade.  
**Status Report:** Tom's quick move to set up Renegade has put him in a position much envied by other software executives. Strengths: Tom's key strength is his ability to delegate work. Also, when it comes to getting his much all over the computer magazines. Tom really is a master and these skills have led to both he and Renegade have an extremely high press profile.  
**Weaknesses:** Often wears jeans with a that and tie, the better costume equivalent of having gear off the back of a knife. Determination to make Renegade stand like dangerous software rebels lead to some sneers.  
**What To Look For:** Yet more magazines with Tom's bottles splashed all over them.

#### PHILIP LEY

**Job Title:** General Marketing Manager, Sega UK.  
**Status Report:** Worked a bit of marketing magic to turn the Sega Master System and Mega Drive from kids' toys into inevitable fashion accessories. Mega Drive now extremely popular and Master System doing a lot better than it would otherwise deserve to.  
**Strengths:** On the ball - more or less. Willing to say no to any angles.  
**Weaknesses:** Keenness to break with tradition leads to flawed decisions (*Megadrive* ads in *Penthouse*?) Inaccessible to the Press.  
**What To Watch For:** How long has Sega got before Nintendo go nuclear and launch the Super Famicom?

#### DOMINIC WHEATLEY

**Job Title:** Joint Managing Director, Domark.  
**Status Report:** Continuing ongoing relationship with Tengen. Broke the ice with Tengen signing two potentially heavyweight co-op titles. Set up The



(Top) Domark's Dominic Wheatley (left) and Mark Fergushan. (Above) Bullfrog's Peter Molyneux.

**Kremlin.** Domark's own off-of-house in-house development ability to good effect. Limited by budget alone. Changed the company logo twice. Annual turnover reached record £1.5m.  
**Strengths:** True industry characters. Love publicity and have managed to maintain a delicate balance between their ever-popular, coffee-closed twist image and respected industry position. Underneath the funny Photo-stunt costumes (throb two very shrewd business brains). Esoteric dress sense.  
**Weaknesses:** The boys must be careful not to rely too heavily on licensed product. So far, most of Domark's original products have not touched a greater percentage of that son of thing world's heart.  
**What To Watch For:** More pictures of the boys in silly costumes, filling out of *Playboy*. Race Drivin', the big gamble on Christmas. Another logo change (please). And more original product.

#### SEAN BIRNKHAN

**Job Title:** Marketing and Sales Director, Mironsoft.  
**Status Report:** Imageworks has grown steadily over the last few years through the concerted work of a professional and proficient team. Sean's input has been a key element in this growth and rise and with Imageworks' generally high standard of product he's been able to finally outshine the previous work at Firebird. Strengths: A no-nonsense straight talking approach gets results even when the product isn't up to scratch as it may be. Tardis is an excellent case in point, he's selling his too many, mostly considering the program's dubious quality. Could sell ice to Eskimos and a bridge to keep it in.  
**Weaknesses:** Sean's industry heavyweight image is brought somewhat into question when he starts lobbing food about in plush restaurants, a habit that tends to get wearier than after the fourteenth time.  
**What To Watch For:** Always ill. Due to an odd plot and being generally strange all around it's going to be a tricky task to mirror a film that hasn't got any where near the blood and guts of its predecessors.

#### PETER MOLYNEUX

**Job Title:** Technical Director, Bullfrog Productions.  
**Status Report:** Write *PowerWorrier* one of the year's biggest chart hits and award scooper-scoopers. Supervised the initial popular *Flood*. He taken his company from a one-hit wonder with *Populous* to regularly the hottest property in the industry today.  
**Strengths:** No-one takes more care when it comes to game production. Design and playability takes precedence over everything. Exceptionally talented designer and programmer. Soaks up publicity like a sponge and now mews Eric Matthews as the players' favourite coder.  
**Weaknesses:** A tendency to be too much of a perfectionist, which dregged *PowerWorrier* badly behind schedule. While the resignation to there the image needs work, otherwise the postscript appeal of the *Flintings* although that gets better isn't a bad thing.  
**What To Watch For:** Bullfrog's negative

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# ACE EXCLUSIVE IN FRANCE

**S**un, sea and surf were not on the top of my priority list as I strolled La Croisette towards Palais Des Festivals. For twelve days in May, film stars and sleazeballs live uncomfortably together in an effort to promote themselves, and maybe, the movie industry. The 44th Cannes Film Festival had been well and truly hijacked by Madonna and her outrageous promotion of the *Truth or Dare*: In Bed with Madonna documentary. Not much chance of a shoot-'em-up conversion here, so my search for an ice cream and the ultimate B-movie continued.

I was on my way to the infamous Hotel Carlton — home of the rich, famous and their myriad of minders. Here, in Suites 160/161, resided the President of bad taste motion



The boats bob in the harbour,  
the beautiful people spend  
their time at parties and

# IN THE CANNES

**Chopper Chicks in  
Zombietown is ready to be  
licensed. Rik Haynes  
investigates...**

pictures Lloyd Kaufman. Have you ever seen *Surf Nazis Must Die*, *The Toxic Avenger* or *Class of Nuke 'Em High*? These, and many more like them, come from Troma, Inc., "one of the oldest and most active independent Producer-Distributors in the world". And when they say independent they mean it!

These cult movies courtesy of Troma began back in the 1970s when the first multiplex cinemas started to appear. Since these pioneering days Troma has enjoyed tremendous demand for its productions thanks to the introduction of home video, cable and satellite viewers hungry for new material — no matter how tacky those shows may be. In fact, the wackier the better,

"Our strategy is simple," says a Troma spokesperson, "produce films on tightly controlled budgets that major Hollywood studios do not supply to the general public. These films are primarily aimed at the 16-35 year-old market, traditionally the largest segment of the movie-going audience."

So what about the actual product? Troma now has a library of nearly 100 feature-length films. "We've always been on the cutting edge of film-making with controversial and unique subjects and titles," the spokesperson confirms.

My personal Tromaville favourite is *Chopper Chicks in Zombietown*. A leather-clad gang of macho motorcycle mamas, known as the Cycle Sluts, stomp into a gritty desert town looking for a few good men. It's a hell-raising biker-babes vs. flesh-hungry zombies in the wildest, action-cummed climax ever committed to celluloid," asserts Troma. The American press have gone wild over this whip-ticking release. Joe Bob Briggs of the *Dallas Observer* says, "The finest features of *Re-Animator* and *Seven Samurai*... Joe Bob says

check it out!" While *The Austin Chronicle* states the movie has: "Shades of *Night of the Living Dead*... brimming with wit, ingenuity, reverence". High praise indeed.

More motion picture mayhem can be found in *A Nymphoid Barbarian in Dinosaurs Hell*, where deadly dinosaurs arise from a nuclear hole



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# CHOPPER CHICKS IN ZOMBIETOWN

cast. Or what about *The Toxic Avenger Part II: The Last Temptation of Toxie*, *Dead Dudes in the House* or *Subhumanoid MeltDown: Class of Nuke 'Em High Part 2*? In the latter epic, another nuclear incident creates hideously deformed but very positive thinking humanoid mutant squirrels and obnoxious talking belly buttons with bad attitudes.

Troma's most popular creation, *The Toxic Avenger*, is being turned into a TV-cartoon series and Marvel has licensed the character for comic books. Even the makers of those *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* are producing *Toxic Toys*. The original *Toxic Avenger* is played by former Dallas Cowboy American Football player Ron Razio with singer and performance artist Phoebe Legere as his 'beautiful, blind, blond, buxom, bimbo' girlfriend. Need we say anymore?

In a very smart marketing move, Troma has re-released two of Kevin Costner's early movies — *Sizzle*

*Beach USA* and *Shadow's Run Black*. These aren't quite in the same league as his efforts *Dancing with Wolves*, *The Untouchables* or *Field of Dreams* but Costner fans will probably be thrilled to see the first filmed efforts of their hero.

Amazingly, there is a video game based around a famous Troma flick currently underway. Are there any other brave software companies out there? Contact ACE if you're interested and we'll put you in touch with Troma.

**Epilogue** Just as I left the cinematic circus of Cannes, a nervous youth shuffled over to me in a rather familiar way. To my surprise, he wasn't selling a chemical cocktail. Instead, I was offered tickets to the special *Terminator 2 Science Fiction* convention in Los Angeles next month. This perhaps highlights the ultimate similarity between Cannes and Hollywood — you can buy anything for the right price. See you in LV.

Err, dude! Don't mess with those chicks! They may be beautiful, but they're hoodies 'n' fluff! Those mutant squirrels! What I know what his ass!



continued

**What To Watch For:** Building re-negotiating his contract with EA to become more of an independent force, as opposed to just a development team. And of course *Pagets*!

## GERRY TUCKER

**Job Title:** MD, Virgin Games  
**Status Report:** Promosion from Financial Director to Managing Director catapulted him into the big leagues. Yet to make big waves with his new found power, but it's early days yet.  
**Strengths:** Financial background translates into good business sense. Good guy.  
**Weaknesses:** Doesn't know much about the games industry. But a fast learner. Fairly low industry profile.  
**What To Watch For:** Gerry becoming a prominent industry figure.

## JAQUI LYONS

**Job Title:** Programmer/ager  
**Status Report:** With a law of her clients in the *Mediascape* but when it hit the web she had a hard slog on her hands wrestling her boys from the gory wreckage.  
**Strengths:** Representing the big boys in the programming world, Jacqui is the *dar* to agents. Her client list reads like a computer industry who's who of who's who. It's not you, it's if she decides to take you on but it's a money walk, yes she'll light tooth and claw to get you the best deal with the best people.  
**Weaknesses:** Jacqui is certainly a driven character but in some respects she may be a tad overdriven. She has not only earned the respect, but also the fear, of many software publishers.  
**What To Watch For:** Later this year will see the release of *Archer Maclean's JD Snooker* and *Glyn Williams' Air Duel*, both excellent and both Jacqui Lyons' properties. The legend continues.

## DAVE BRABEN

**Job Title:** Freelance software author  
**Status Report:** Dave's currently at work on *Etha II*, probably the most eagerly awaited game since the last most eagerly awaited game. Publishers are already lining up for the right old doing to see who gets this guaranteed money maker as their co-laborer.  
**Strengths:** A fortune from computer software rumored to be hovering around the £600,000 mark, Braben's strong and original ideas are heavily inspirational to the computer programming fraternity giving him a sort of passive power over games styles.  
**Weaknesses:** Outspoken, though his views on consoles and machine capabilities are most kindly described as 'unconventional'. Nintendo Elite failed impress our Japanese or American cousins and apparently is still without a publisher.  
**What To Watch For:** *Etha II* and then it's probably another seven years wait until his next major release.

## GEOFF CRAMMOND

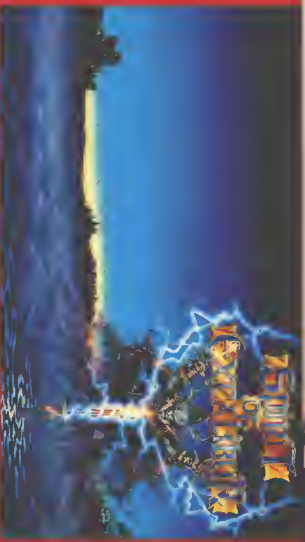
**Job Title:** Freelance software author  
**Status Report:** Currently working on a secret project for Microgen. This project has kept him busy as a bee since the completion of the ever popular *Star Car Racer*.  
**Strengths:** Like Dave Braben, a power merger through inspirational and innovative work across a variety of computer formats.  
**Weaknesses:** A strange strange fellow with practically no colour vision at all. What's more he's deeply suspicious of all computer business types who cross his path. Geoff can often cause great hassle with software publishers through an overly protective attitude to his work.

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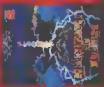
Enough about the students at Troma's Institute of Technology have brought their work home with them. Look out for mutant squirrels and talking belly buttons...





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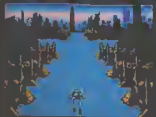


(Top) RoboRaid has been developed over the past 12 months, though Arts Development took a break to make the Predator 2 game of the month. The final version is a half-stellar counter through the trials of the master. Paul Walker is providing the graphics with much by Austin Schmitt. RoboRaid is effectively three games in one and will be released to the masses for all major video formats. The console versions are currently planned.

(Above) Warzone starts up with a "Welcome" screen. In the underground townships of RoboRaid's phase work. Your pile of robots can pick-up extra armor along the way including armor-plating, missiles, grenades, flame-throwers and lasers. The type of weapons currently selected and amount of ammunition left is displayed in the green graphics in the top left of the screen. This arcade adventure style part of the game is filled with various to destroy and objects to avoid. The robot's main goal is to destroy the enemy and add dropping from the ceiling.

(Bottom Left) A look at the actual stage RoboRaid is the PC from Imagearts and Arts Development. By the next century (Main) has been named into a colorful five warzone. As the last surviving Warzone you must stop the jackhacks from taking over what is left of the city. This 3-D version has you striding down the streets on your way to Metal Robot HQ.

They feel no fear or pain.  
Rik Haynes meets the  
machines of cybernetic  
culture...



**T**hink robot and you'll probably conjure up images of Robocop, Terminator or R2-D2. You may even remember the bulbous

Robbie the Robot from Forbidden Planet. If you're into the trendy clubland scene you could possibly shout that 'We Are The Robots' slogan using a stupid voice in reference to the recent Kraftwerk remix. Just why are we all robo-crazy?

Karel Capek first coined the phrase 'robot' in his Rossum's Universal Robots novel during the early 1920s. The term is derived from 'robota' - the Czech word for labour.

■ They're not building cars or involved in some other industrious task, miscreant robots are usually up to mechanical mischief. They like nothing better than to equip themselves with the latest in armour-plating and weaponry of maximum megadeath. And if a real idiot writes their control program, the end of humanity is just around the

corner. Take a glance at Fred Saberhagen's series of Berserker books for some scary confirmation.

The Japanese took to the idea of robots from the very start. Sci-fi author Issac Asimov is seen as the robo-guru, but the likes of Masaki Sakamoto were literally years ahead. While Japanese technologists strive for the fully automated factory, the equally creative talents of science-fiction visionaries are producing a constant supply of robot movies, comics, animated TV shows, toys and video games.

#### ROBOT REVENGE

Generally speaking, these fantasy robots are supposed to do our bidding. Except they usually turn against us within the first three chapters. Sometimes they even transform into a higher species of life. Remember the super-human qual-

lies of the replicants in Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* movie?

At other times, there is actually a fusion of flesh and metal with human pilots of huge warrior-robots physically and mentally linked to their machines of destruction. Battletech merely scratches the surface.

Robots are no strangers to computer and console games. Who can forget the classic sample of speech from *Impossible Mission* (Epyx/J&S Gold): "Destroy him, my robots!" And that's exactly what they've been trying to do over the past seven years. These days, nearly every Japanese shoot-'em-up features some sort of transformable droid complete with plasma engines, photon guns and an uncanny resemblance to us poor humans. There's simply no stopping them. During the course of May, ACE looked at Ultra Games' *Base Wars* (see news) and *Metal Mutants* from Simeris/Palace (reviewed on page 82). Plus there's *Cyber Fight* (Electronic Arts) and *Robozone* (ImageWorks) featured elsewhere in this article.

Even Maxis, the Californian developer of *SimCity* and *SimEarth*, launched *Robospots* for the Macintosh last month. This is a futuristic battle simulation game which can be played by up to four players over the AppleTalk network.

Leeds-based games developer Vektor Graphics are working on a game based around Battletech. Still at an early stage, this title uses sophisticated 3D software technology with individual animation and movement of joints to give incredibly realistic results. Seeing one of these beasts falling down and getting back up is apparently a very entertaining sight. Unfortunately, insiders suggest Activision has put the game on ice. We hope they're wrong!

#### JUDGMENT DAY

Gary Bracey, Software Director at Ocean, reckons the forthcoming computer and console games based around *Terminator 2* and *Robocop 3* will make software developers rethink the way movie-licensed games are produced.

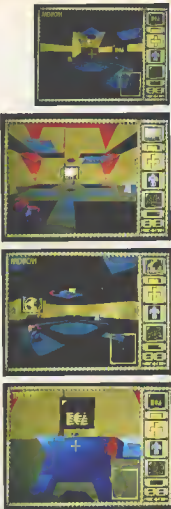
Digital Image Design, the action simulation specialists behind *F-29 Retaliator* and *Epac*, have already created some stunning 3D work for *Robocop 3*. Despite a new 12-Rating for the third movie, there's no shortage of energy in the 16-bit versions of the game. The car chase, for example, utilises graphics routines more advanced than those found in *Retaliator*. Black comedy isn't missing, either. We'd bet you can't wait to try *Robocop 3*'s latest peripheral, the flying 'jet-pack'.

On the subject of *Terminator 2*, Bracey is remaining tight-lipped until the movie is released in the summer. This science-fiction extravaganza has reportedly cost a whopping \$100 million to make. Not surprising when you consider the special effects bill came in at a little under \$17 million and muscular star Arnie Schwarzenegger got his own private jet plane for his troubles.

Meanwhile, Ocean is showing the Gameboy adaption of *Robocop 2* at the Consumer Electronics Show at Chicago. ACE hopes to bring you an on-location report next month.

#### COLONISATION OF CYBERNETICS

With all this robot-inspired innovation, what can we expect to see in the coming decades? There's not too much to worry about at the



(Above top to bottom) *Cyber Fight* (working title) should push back the state-of-the-art in PC graphics when its released later in 1993. This one- or two-player battleship takes the theme of gladiators fighting in an arena and updates it through the use of sci-fi scenarios, wire-guided missiles and computer-aided roller skis.

With an anime adaptation already underway, there's a good chance that Electronic Arts will incorporate *Cyber Fight* conversions to the megadisks and Super Famicom. By the way, one of the fancy graphics techniques incorporated into the game can be seen in the far left. Programmer Michael Powell uses "Texture Mapping" to project the moving television images on the screen. Very clever.

BA's *Cyber Fight* from Hypermedia author Michael Powell, has elements of *Robocop*, Robert Hebbel's 1977 novel (*Starship Troopers*) and the Japanese Gundam concept of an armoured suit or piloted exoskeleton. With the likes of *Cyber Fight*, *Robocop 3* and *Terminator 2* - robot games could be dominating the charts this Christmas.

moment, leading technologists in the field are still trying to build a robot that can walk up and down a flight of stairs without the assistance of any human. The real world is just too complex for the average cybernaut. That will gradually change, though.

The *Robocop* film character of today could become the armed and armoured traffic warden of tomorrow. Parking on a double yellow line in the London of 2027 could be very risky indeed. Especially if the harmless wheel clamp is replaced by a quick burst of 20mm cannon as the ultimate deterrent. And you thought *The Terminator* was mean?



#### GUNDAM MOBILE SUIT

This epic Japanese saga created by Yoshiyuki Tomino began as an animated television series in 1979 and has since grown into a self-perpetuating industry of video games, books, films, toys and comics. "Tomino's Gundam series marked the beginning of the 'robot fever' that has swept both Japan and the USA," says publisher Ballantine Books. "The Mobile Suit is the prototype for all the realistic robots we've encountered in the past ten years. An entire generation of Japanese has been raised on the Gundam stories and images, but the ultimate testimony to the concept's success is that there has even been a parody animation series created, called *SD (Super Deformation) Gundam*."



# DAY OF THE

# PROD



## PHIL HARRISON

**Job Title:** Product Manager: Mindscape  
**Status Report:** Joining Mindscape at his conception of its UK branch, Phil has risen as the company's stature has grown. Now he chooses who to employ from the large list of people wanting to join the program for Mindscape.

**Strengths:** Delegates like a good 'un getting the staff below him working away ultra efficiently. And he's got a Sierra Comworld!

**Weaknesses:** Sometimes he can be a little over enthusiastic when it comes to relating tales of past achievements.

**What To Watch For:** Mindscape is all geared up to produce a bundle of NES and Super Famicom stuff under Phil's direction.

## BOB HAY

**Job Title:** Head of FAST

**Status Report:** Under Bob Hay's direction FAST have continued in their relentless fight against the scourge of computer piracy. The last year has seen FAST's sights sensibly drift away from the obvious target of the home computer hacker to concentrate more and more on corporate piracy.

**Strengths:** As an ex-cop, Bob knows more than a hot tatty and those who have received early morning raids from Bob and his Constabulary friends will testify to his determination.

**Weaknesses:** There was that 'Goooo to shop your mates' FAST ad campaign which surprised many with its greed-motivated angle.

**What To Watch For:** Even greater success and an increasing number of prosecutions.

## STUART DINSEY

**Job Title:** Editor: Computer Trade Weekly

**Status Report:** CTW's mix of authority and gossip makes it only trade paper really worth reading and Stuart's involvement since becoming Editor has cemented the paper's position.

**Strengths:** Sharp and brighter than brand new pins. His head writing skills come from the Intendoo school of Journalism of last resort. In no time at all.

**Weaknesses:** Stuart often tends to focus on trivial ambiguities at the expense of the bigger picture. Some have aimed criticisms of word-twisting at him too.

**What To Watch For:** More of the same.

## ERIC MATTHEWS

**Job Title:** Head man, The Intrepid Knights

**Status Report:** Produced *Speedball II* for Microsoft then lured Linka with *Renegade*. Put together *Magik Pockets* the first and is currently working on *Magik Pockets*.

**Strengths:** Still the young gunner, number one software star - mainly due to the valiant efforts of Microsoft's hype machine. Never out of the magazines. Rubs shoulders with the likes of Tim Simenon and Betty Boo.

**Weaknesses:** Rubs shoulders with Tim Simenon and Betty Boo. The Intrepids inevitably set themselves up for a critical grilling by over-hyping their product. *Gods* was good, but not the miracle promised, and *Magik Pockets* isn't any better. *Intrepid* in force could well plummet. Maybe his *Intrepid* mates are up.

**What To Watch For:** *Magik Pockets*.

## ANIL DUTTA

**Job Title:** Managing Director: Amco

**Status Report:** Amco's CD-ROMs have found a large popularity to super-stardom. Amco has lost many big-time publishers have been begging him to allow them to produce disk. Made some impressive first time console deals with the Japanese that will put Amco on the Super FamiCom, Game Boy and everything else!

**Strengths:** Enough good business sense to make money on a string of mediocre trivia and strip-poker games for years.

33

## QUIT

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## GUNHED

Japan's answer to *The Terminator* has proved to be a huge hit in the Far East with, you've probably guessed it, a wide variety of tie-in book and toy products to feed off this interest. *Gunhed*, not to be confused with the superlative PC Engine game, is similar in concept to *Gundem* and *Bobotech* and includes plenty of impressive looking mechs to satisfy the techno-sadists. A big Japanese hit in 1989, the live-action movie will be released in America and possibly Europe later in the year. *Gunhed: The Movie* combined the talents of many famous Japanese film-folk. Special visual effects artist Koichi Kawakita studied under Elji Tauburaya, the man who created *Godzilla*. In *Viz Select Comics Gunhed Issue 3*, Kawakita says his most difficult creation for *Gunhed* was the devastating flight scene between *Gunhed* and *Aerobot* - the climatic highlight of the movie.

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COMPUTER TRADE WEEKEND  
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HOTEL

Fed up with 256 colour graphics? Fed up with yer average CD quality audio? Want a game system that delivers an unlimited colour palette, enhanced digital sound, is Amiga, PC, and ST compatible, promises full CDTV emulation, AND plays the very latest Hollywood blockbusting movies, complete with Dolby surround sound? Of course you do....

Laserdiscs come in two sizes and two colours: 30cm and 20cm, giving up to 120 minutes of video and superb digital sound on the gold disks (silver disks are analogue sound only)

# LASERDISK

**D**irk Neuen's pride and joy is a £100 Laserdisk version of 2001 A Space Odyssey. This little number not only features a digitally remastered version of the famous movie (including a subtle correction of red colourcast on the original celluloid) but also includes footage of Arthur C Clarke discussing the future of space exploration, NASA footage of the Jupiter fly-bys of Voyager 1 and 2, hundreds of visual, textual, and audio memories concerning the making of the original film, and a special montage of images from the film together with space footage and narrative. The film is presented in the original widescreen format and the quality, played back on a Pioneer CLD1500 laserdisk player, is astounding.

Great for film buffs, but if you're itching for a little interaction, the thing that's really going to get you excited is the 3.5" disk sitting beside the disk player and the little black lead coming out of

the back. These small additions put the whole glorious kaboodle under the direct control of your Amiga 500, ST, or PC - and that's just the beginning.

It all started when Dirk was lounging in front of his TV watching a laserdisk video. His eyes strayed to the Amiga on the sideboard and it suddenly occurred to him that it might be interesting to connect the two together. After all, games like Dragon's Lair and Space Ace had originally been designed for laserdisk systems. If he could cobble some kind of interface together, perhaps he could get some old game disks and create his own laserdisk arcade machine.

This led to the first Software Corner Lasergames interface, now available in Germany for £65. Using this gadget, you can connect a Pioneer CLD1500 or 1450 to your micro and play away at any laserdisk game to your heart's content without having to fork out numerous 50p

bits. What's more, laserdisk games don't stop at Dragon's Lair and Space Ace - see the panel in this feature for more information on titles.

The Lasergames interface is a nice little niche product for games enthusiasts, but then Software Corner began to get ambitious and their next development goes a lot further into the realms of advanced computer entertainment. Dirk and his colleagues reckoned it would be possible, using the particular capabilities of the Pioneer machine, to produce an interface that would enable the unit to be used as a CD-ROM drive - with of course, the added advantage of Laserdisk video and enhanced CD audio sound.

Having come up with that idea, it was a short step to the concept of a CDTV emulation system for Amiga owners who wanted to upgrade to CDTV but might also fancy the advantages of laserdisk movies. In theoretical terms, this wouldn't be impossible, it would, however

involve not only but also get opening as being taken going to talk his friends only possible software routines that functions of any way Commodore. This work Corner are on demonstration full system around £1400 but exclusive up to be, it's alternative



The machine that makes it all possible: the Pioneer CLD1500 and (above) the unique Pioneer audio interface that made it practical for computer control and CDTV emulation

[Insert] The Pioneer CLD1500 a multi-disc player, so you can enjoy CD, CD videos, and laserdisc movies all from one machine. And if Software Corner's system delivers everything it promises, you'll be able to drop a CD-ROM in the centre slot and watch

**'I've been a fan of this system since 1981 - if you want the highest possible quality movies at home, it's got no equal.'**

Dirk Neuen, Software Corner

## LASERDISK COMEBACK

The original Laserdisk standard was launched as a consumer product by Philips in 1981 after a couple of years confinement to professional interactive video markets. Unlike other optical disk formats (which are almost all digital), laserdisk combines digital and analogue media, giving you on the one hand the high fidelity of CD digital audio and, on the other, the high frame rate and colour bandwidth of analogue video. For watching movies, it's unbeatable in terms of quality and (compared to tapes) convenience.

Traditionally, the only drawback has been the price. When they first appeared, laserdisk players cost around £1000 and the disks weren't cheap either, with premium titles costing well over £100. By 1985, the laserdisk market was practically dead, although the format lingered on thanks to strong support from Pioneer and a continued interest in the interactive video training world. By the Christmas of 1985, you could pick up a discontinued player in the shops for as little as £150.

Meanwhile, the system had been adopted by Atari for use in the arcades and then continued until around 1983 - by which time

manufacturers Laserdisc A Companies not together began to gradually the first to produce piracy of video problem, as on laserdiscs. By 1990, 10000 titles in USA. Even in Britain began to be after their in America, able to see arrived from the growing ind to the sular in France lagging behind. Laserdisc with Pioneer costing around £400 relatively a part of Europe. Britain's market, which. Com

## DISKOPAEDIA

Compact Disk is familiar to almost everybody now, giving a clearer sound and increased playback options when digital music recording and playback techniques. There are however two other disk formats that can be played using a multi-format machine like the Pioneer CDDVS90/1450.

First, you've got CDDV (CD Video). These disks are 12cm size and are essentially a cross between CD and Laserdisc. They hold analogue video tracks capable of giving up to six minutes of colour video together with digital sound (encoded in CLV mode) plus another 20 minutes of extended digital audio play.

The other you've got the Laserdisc themselves. These come in two sizes and two formats: 30cm and 28cm, and CAV and CLV (see the main text for explanations of these formats). CAV disks are used for standard play, giving 72 minutes of video on a 30cm disk and 22 minutes on a 28cm disk. CLV gives you automated playing times of 120 minutes and 40 minutes respectively.

CAV doesn't just mean shorter playing times, however. This format makes up for the reduced capacity by offering the very useful multi-speed and stilling play functions. You can also access any individual frame and get a perfect, flicker-free freeze frame display of it.

CLV can store sound either digitally or in analogue format. You can easily tell which is which: gold disks are digital and silver disks are analogue.

Finally, it's worth remembering that imported disks (often featuring the newest titles) store video in NTSC format. British television systems, however, are dedicated to the PAL format. You get around this, Pioneer also manufacture a (more expensive) model called the CDDV55, which automatically detects which standard is used and adjusts itself accordingly - so you can play almost any video movie from the USA, Japan, or Europe without worrying about video formats.

Left: High Audio CD, 74 minutes of sound on the 12cm size and 24 minutes on the 30cm single

Above: Right: Left: CAV 18 minutes of digital sound and six minutes of video, available in 12cm format only

involve not only perfecting the CD-ROM interface, but also getting hold of the Commodore CDTV operating software. The first step is already being taken, but naturally Commodore are not going to fall over themselves to provide Dirk and his friends with copies of the CDTV ROMs, so the only possibility is to 'reverse engineer' this software - i.e. develop independently a set of routines that, although they exactly mirror the functions of the Commodore software, do not in any way copy the code or otherwise infringe on Commodore's copyright.

Work is now underway and Software Corner are planning to have the first prototype on demonstration by the time you read this. The full system is planned for launch in early July at around £145 and you'll be able to check out a full exclusive review in ACE. If it's all it's cracked up to be, it could turn out to be an attractive alternative for existing Amiga owners who would

like not only CDTV capability but also a state-of-the-art video and CD player to boot. PC and ST owners could benefit too, from having a good CD-ROM peripheral with the same additional features. Laserdisc systems, it seems, could be due for a comeback.

## HOW TO GO LASERDISK!

Software Corner are currently in the process of replicating a British distributor - but in the meantime you can contact them direct at the following address/telephone number:

Software Corner  
Augustenstrasse 8  
6800 Mannheim  
West Germany  
Telephone: 070 48 83 48 23 57  
or 070 48 831 44 33 32

later this year, for the disks as well as the hardware.

One of the advantages of the latest generation of Laserdisc players is their ability to read both CAV and CLV disk formats. Those of you who got last month's free ACE techno-guide will know that this refers to two different techniques of reading disks: constant angular and constant linear velocity. CAV is used by traditional LPs, and means the platter spins at a constant rate so that the area under the read head travels at a varying speed (the tracks at the edge of the disk being longer than those near the centre). In CLV systems, the area under the read head maintains the same relative speed at all times because the system increases the RPM as the head approaches the centre, shortens tracks.

Because both these systems can be handled by some of the modern systems (which will also accept varying sizes of disk), some rare generation Laserdisc players could become useful peripherals for computer systems, reading CD ROMs as well as traditional CD audio disks AND laser video movies. You can find out more technical details on Laserdisc, particularly the Pioneer CDDVS90, in the competition section of this feature.



...continued

before Kick Off Ever Came Along. He successfully turned Kick Off into the phenomenon it deserved to be. Weaknesses: How long it is to be a willing Kick Off? We're promised more disks and Player Manager 2, but then what?

What To Watch For: Tip Off. Kick Off on a basketball court from Steve Sweeney, Player Manager 2.

### ANDREW WRIGHT

Job Title: Product Director, Virgin Games  
Status Report: A good year. Bought up all the old Infomart titles and I cleaned up putting them out as a former a throw Strengths: Knows a good thing when he sees one. That comes from years of experience at Activision, Mattel and Thales. Has the courage of his convictions, and isn't afraid to whip up a bit of controversy when it's needed (Floor G, Conflict Weaknesses: A little volatile at times. Rarely on time for social events. Gets bored easily. Sometimes a little too big for his Doc Masters. What To Watch For: His pet project, Floor 9 and Reams. Another shrewd approach to flogging budget software (like the original) ahead of success.

### JEREMY SMITH

Job Title: Managing Director, Core Design  
Status Report: Took his independent development company and transformed it into a high profile software house. The first release, Corporation, ransacked the charts and then hit the yardstick. Since then he's done the business with Tomak, Car-Vap and now Chuck Rock. Strengths: A happy go lucky attitude coupled with good hands-on business sense is Smith's recipe for success. Has a good eye for games a year years developing for Gremlin. Excellent press despite the success of Core, it's still only a tiny firm and Jeremy needs to be careful - one big turkey would be disastrous. Must beware of coming more than he can chew, as Core seems to have an awful lot in the pipeline at the moment.

What To Watch For: Company expansion. Corp 2.

### MARK CALE

Job Title: Managing Director, System 3  
Status Report: Bricks links with Activision, somewhat acrimoniously - and then nothing much happened. Firebird's Quert, Vendetta, Last Ninja 3 all turned up at long last, (apart from Ninja 3). Strengths: Knows what the purgals like to play, and isn't afraid to give it to them. Managed to attain mega-share and all-time image through tough times. Weaknesses: Required to have a fiery temperament. The transition from long of 5-10 to a 10-18 company isn't proving easy. What To Watch For: Last Ninja 4?

### JEZ SAN

Job Title: Managing Director, Argonaut Software  
Status Report: Got Hawk finished at last after four years. Changed its name to Birds of Prey. Handled mediocre Days of Thunder for Mindscape. Increased console commitment. Strengths: Still holds on to high calibre industry profile despite damaging repercussions of so-so product. Even so quotable. Weaknesses: Days of Thunder proved the Afterburner days aren't over yet. What To Watch For: Birds of Prey, which it should put him back on the map. His top secret 3D Nintendo project for the US.

### DEAN BARNETT

Job Title: Head of Nintendo Marketing Europe, Ocean  
Status Report: Getting to work straight away. Dean has already played part in attaching up the NES Battletoads license from American games TradeWest.

ES 35

## GAMES GALORE

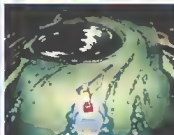
Most people have heard of Dragon's Lair and Space Ace, but in fact the Intertek format boasts a lot more titles than you might think. Currently there are 64 Intertek games with new releases now occurring on a regular basis. Thirty-four of these titles have currently been licensed for use with the Software Corner system.

Titles currently available include Dragon's Lair, Firefox, Space Ace, a couple of X-rated strip disks called Casino Royale 1 & 2, and - coming soon - a superb conversion of Super Hang On.

The early Intertek games simply fetched different sequences from the disk according to the action you took with the joystick. Furthermore, the old hardware systems were very slow at locating the right sequence, resulting in periodic "black outs" as the laser looked for the next scene.

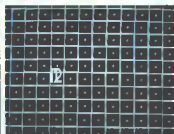
On modern players, the access time is far, far quicker. What's more, many of today's games combine disk output with graphics output from your computer to generate a composite image that is much more in tune with modern gameplay techniques. For example, in Super Hang On, the Amiga would generate the bike in the foreground and the Intertek game does the scrolling scenery and other machines. As a result you get a very fast display with graphics every bit as good as the arcade versions.

As with CD ROM, all Intertek games have the option to include superb sound tracks - BITSC Intertek systems have no less than four audio tracks (two digital and two analogue), and even PAL machines (which require more data for the larger PAL format display and so can have finer sound tracks) have digital stereo of CD quality.



[Above] Watch out for the Intertek Raj! Our hero loses a few vehicles after the wicked Dorf manages to get in a blast with the up-reducing weapon you must destroy in Space Ace

[Left] Regenerating the underground river scenarios in Dragon's Lair. The disk is arranged so that most associated sequences are stored close together minimising the time it takes for the laser to find the next scene. Scenes are also duplicated on the disk to further minimise access times, and modern players can reduce the waiting time to a fraction of a second



A scene from Firefox, which combines real live video with computer generated graphics. The laser sort scans the grid system used by the game to communicate with the computer, informing it which sector of the screen is currently occupied by the enemy.



Dick shows, takes another order for the new system at the Software Corner shop. 'I've seen the first article about the system appeared in Germany. The phone hasn't stopped ringing...'

Win a Pioneer

Software Corner exclusive of lasergames your machine software, a fabulous CD-ROM be able to read vast numbers on laserdisk

WHAT YOU To put your money, you make that will play physical and are listed below. Here goes:

1. Find a place
2. Master the BLOCK CALL
3. Locate the before 148
4. Assume the postcard of
5. Meditate
6. Inscribe the envelope -
7. capitals, you own, you QUESTION this task
8. Find a step can be Challenge for
9. Find a step than you
10. Find a step through the of July 8th

THE QUEST How many licensed for

THE RULES 1. No empty Corner, or entries. 2. The winner correct question next ten prizes

# LASERDISK BACK

The Software Corner Lasergames Interface giving you all you need to play the original Dragon's Lair and up to 33 other games currently licensed for the system





# EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION!

Win a Software Corner games interface AND a superb Pioneer CLD1500 Laserdisk player

Software Corner are offering ACE readers an exclusive chance to win this tremendous lasergames system. You'll get an interface for your machine (PC, ST, or Amiga) interface software, a copy of *Dragons Lair*, AND a fabulous CLD1500 Laserdisk player - so you'll be able to enjoy not only the games, but also the vast numbers of premium movie titles available on laserdisk.

## WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

To put yourself at the forefront of video technology, you must face up to a series of challenges that will place awesome demands on your physical and mental resources. These challenges are listed below, followed by THE QUESTION. Here goes...

1. Find a pen or biro.
2. Master written English, in particular the use of BLOCK CAPITALS.
3. Locate a postcard or envelope manufactured before 1485BC. If you can't find one, any old postcard or envelope will do.
4. Assume a pose of intense concentration.
5. Meditate upon THE QUESTION.
6. Inscribe upon the postcard (or the back of the envelope - no sealed entries, please!), in block capitals, your name, your address, the machine you own, your age, and the answer to THE QUESTION. Think carefully before you complete this task.
7. Master the ancient martial art of Bushido (This step can be omitted, but it may help with Challenge Number 7 below).
8. Find a stamp - or a person who is both weaker than you are and in possession of a stamp.
9. Stick the stamp upon the postcard or envelope and address it to ACE Lasersdisk Competition, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.
10. Find a postbox and push the stamped entry through the slot to arrive before the closing date of July 8th.

## THE QUESTION

How many Lasersdisk games are currently licensed for the Software Corner system?

## THE RULES

1. No employee of EMAP Images, Software Corner, or their associated companies may enter.
2. The winner of this first prize will be the first correct qualifying entry drawn at random. The next ten entries drawn will receive the runners-up prizes.

3. Only one entry per household. Multiple entries will be disqualified.
4. All entries must be received by the closing date of July 8th 1991. Results will be announced in ACE issue 48.

## THE PIONEER CLD1500...

This little beauty accepts 30cm and 20cm laserdiscs (ICAV and CLV), any CD including 8cm 'singles', and any 12cm CDV (see the Diskopaedia panel elsewhere for details of these formats).

Not only that, but you get stunning performance - 4-20,000KHz audio with 105dB signal to noise ratio, true 18 bit twin D/A converters, and 8 times over sampling.

And if all that's nonsense to you, it'll be poetry to your eyes and ears whenever you use the machine, giving you crystal clear audio and video performance. Make no mistake - these specs are HOT!

Furthermore, you get dozens of useful playback options, including...

- programme play of up to 24 tracks (or 'chapters' on video discs)
- multiseek play, including still and step frame on CAV disks
- CD auto programme edit
- random play and/or random repeat
- no less than seven repeat modes, including 2-point, track, memory, programme
- 10-key direct search and play of chapters on LD and tracks on CD/CDV
- frame number search for LD's and time/number search for CDs
- full remote control

...and so much more that we couldn't fit it all in!



The Pioneer CLD1500 - standard (stereo) optical disc performance and secure PRS if you still fit it into your exclusive competition!

**Strength:** A reasoned and intelligent manner belies her tender age of twenty six and when it comes to dealing with the big boys Deet's more than adequately armed.

**Weaknesses:** Ladies man.

**What To Watch For:** Ocean's image to recover after a slump during which even without Griffin and Stokes thanks to Dean e appointment.

## IAN RICHARDSON

**Job Title:** PR Manager, Grenlin  
**Status Report:** Big-drinking Ian is a Jorro e PR man if ever there was one. Pushed Grenlin's many racing games to good effect and organised excellent lunches in busti Strengths: Always on the phone. Always am and about. Knows the product and plays the magazine game well. Weaknesses: Goes through petty cash expenses like a hot knife through butter.  
**What To Watch For:** A follow up to Lotus, a couple of big licences and increased power within the firm.

## RABIELE WOOLYATT

**Job Title:** PR Manager, US Gold  
**Status Report:** Solidified on through a so-so year. Made plenty of noise about the Godfather deal. Didn't do a bad job of the Delphine signing either. Strengths: Extrovert personality, likes a laugh. Organises the best press events and an old hand at bunting up cynic all journals. Good contacts both here and abroad. Weaknesses: Occasionally let down by the product.  
**What To Watch For:** Woody PR Ing e Italy excellent product.

## CATRY CAMPOS

**Job Title:** Publicity Machine, Miramax  
**Status Report:** Helped push the Rittap Brothers to new heights of superstardom before they went to Renegade. Pulled strings to get journals into special screenings of *Back To The Future Part III* and *Turk 182*. No such luck with *Flight of the Intruder* or *Prehension*, though. Strengths: Diligent worker, excellent contacts both here and abroad. Genuine enthusiasm for good product. Good for getting industry gossip. Weaknesses: "Can I call you back?"  
**What To Watch For:** More of the same.

## PAM BRIFFITHS

**Job Title:** Group PR Manager, Mindscape International  
**Status Report:** Laid high-profile Ocean PR job to join Mindscape. Got the company's PR set in order in a couple of short months. Strengths: Knows everyone. Knows how to enhance journalists. Weaknesses: "She's not in right now".  
**What To Watch For:** The Mindscape name becoming more prominent in Pam e capable hands.

## CLARE ERBELET

**Job Title:** Managing Manager, Domark  
**Status Report:** Played e blinder (renaming Domark) e product over the last year. Strengths: Genially enthusiastic about the products she pushes. Sense of humour. Knows e late bit about games too - do you know the wretched *Carrier Command*? Weaknesses: Always pulled off her feet. More balls in the air than e very good juggler. Inevitably some things simply get forgotten.  
**What To Watch For:** More of the same.

## PETE STONE

**Job Title:** Managing Director, Palace Software  
**Status Report:** Was saved from oblivion when Palace's parent company lost interest in French firm Leisure Holdings, who now pull the strings. Lost Delphine Games to US Gold.





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Core business for *Laser Quest* is apparently within the 15-24 age range. "We get families coming down and loads of kids for birthday treats. We also run special sales for groups of people. Students, unemployed and shiftworkers come in during the day. For the real addicts we have more advanced games from 11pm till late. Accidents do happen, I'm glad to say they're very rare. It normally occurs when people do something totally stupid like jumping off ramps that are 20ft high."

*Laser Quest* requires a covered space of just 3,500 square feet. Almost anywhere can be transformed into a palace of frenzied fire – old cinemas, disused sports halls and snooker halls inclusive. The Manchester site is, oddly enough, situated in a railway arch. These rather untheatrical surroundings haven't deterred dedicated cyber clubs or even local celebs like The Happy Mondays and Inspiral Carpets. Could this explain the emergence of the Northern indie rock-dance scene? Probably not.

Apart from the aforementioned outlets in the north and south of England, there are also two sites each in Dublin and Belfast. The entrance fee varies from two to four pounds "Peckham is a much larger venue than those before. It's twice the size of the Manchester site. There's more for the players to explore when they get inside the 8,000 square feet. This is a 'destination site' with spin-off business coming from pool tables, coin-operated video games and a burger bar. This is the largest European venue of its type."

How does Pickersgill think *Laser Quest* compares to pinball games? "It has a much shorter time and much wider appeal. Six years-old and up. Ages for pinball games are much more restrictive. I think you get the same sort of buzz off both."

And what about talk of creating a live video game? "We've certainly got an angle on it. You know the thing with Virtual Reality, I think we're taking it from the other end. We're building it up from the physical world into an electronic world. It can be



described as a video game brought to life but it's a lot of other things as well. It's a new sport."

"The future for us is developing a lot of outlets for *Laser Quest* and establishing it as a brand leader synonymous with the concept as it stands. The directors of *Laser Quest* are young and in-touch with the concept and the customers. We're developing more and more devices inside the game area for people to interact with. We'll be developing this theme a lot more over the year. The whole thing is to provide the best game available and we'll make this our continual objective. We've also got a few sideways moves in the pipeline as well. I really can't say much more at this stage."

A National League for *Laser Questers*, quarterly newsletter and even international playoffs are currently on the cards. Will the Olympics be next? "I think there's a very good chance," declares Pickersgill.

"The only real way to fully appreciate this is to experience it at first hand," confides *Laser Quest*. There are bound to be hackers already working on devices to give themselves special sharpshooting skills or software-generated shields. Some people just don't know how to party!

Fun, frolics and a fast blast – what more could you possibly want? Urban warfare has just entered the next stage. Do you feel lucky? Well, do ya cyberspunk?



There's little danger of punters slipping away with any unauthorized information of their *Laser Quest* day out, just look at the size of that pinball!

If you're ready to become a real *Laser Quest* player, the latest venue is at 287 Rye Lane, near the Peckham BR Station. To find out more about *Laser Quest* call 085 228 2231 and tell them where you heard about it!



*Laser Quest*'s tech-savvy environment is sure to get the players' pulses racing



...continued

Didn't release much, and what did come out seemed to come and go without much recognition – remember *Yodanis Nightmares*?

*Strengths*: Petri will never go down without a fight. It looks as though the product line may be peering up its last with the interesting *Demolish*, *Crystals of Arborne* and whatever goodies the new found friendship with the French brings across the channel.

*Weaknesses*: Petri's product has a nasty habit of getting swamped and disappearing in the development mists (Manster Museum, Amazing Astral Adventures). Palace's direction seems a little uncertain at the moment, and Petri needs to do some hairy steering to get everything back on track.

**What To Watch For**: How much Palace's day-to-day operation charges radiate the herd of its new French masters.

#### TONY KAVANAGH

**Job Title**: Managing Director, Knaiss Software  
**Status Report**: Successfully sustained and expanded Knaiss Software even the last 12 months. Had biggest hit to date, *Manchester United* which sold 80,000 copies. *Strengths*: Foresight – the ability to judge the market way ahead. And the ability to build on success. *Weaknesses*: Early hit-and-run success rate with prod UK.

**What To Watch For**: Hands across the ocean?

#### PETER CALVER

**Job Title**: Managing Director, Audiogenic  
**Status Report**: Carry deals with tricky puzzle *Loopa* has got that product to appear with varying success on NES, Gameboy, Arcade and even pub machines. *Strengths*: Petri's longevity surpasses just about everybody else in the software world. As ELSPA treasurer, Peter enjoys a special sort of respect from other industry luminaries as their software scribe.

*Weaknesses*: Rumours of some disgruntled staff. The style of product Audiogenic have specialised in is somewhat parochial and not the sort of thing a world market welcomes with open arms.

**What To Watch For**: Super Famicom is the world currently on all software developers lips and Audiogenic were among the first in Europe to get development systems.

#### ROGER ASHWETE

**Job Title**: General Secretary for ELSPA

**Status Report**: There aren't many companies out there not in sync with the ELSPA way of life but Roger is working on recruiting these Johnny come laylins. This year saw Ian Shaw's Greenlan join the fold. *Strengths*: Roger's a good going man and gentle humour stands him in good stead when it comes to wangling out the finer points of complicated ELSPA issues.

*Weaknesses*: His stily pipe-smoking habit may diminish his respect in fast lanes.

**What To Watch For**: More of the same

#### CLIVE BISHOP

**Job Title**: Chairman of the National Association of Computer Retailers

**Status Report**: Clive's organisation is dedicated to putting forward the views and feelings of the many independent, handy high street computer shops.

*Strengths*: When there's a computer retailer wrong to right Clive is as quick as a flash. His stoic nature is almost legendary.

*Weaknesses*: Maybe Clive's keen Scotch Dog spirit and his demand for details facts and figures make Clive a bit of a prickly pear. Keen to tell everyone how long he's been in the business.

**What To Watch For**: More of the same



Us wimpy Brits entered the VR market way behind the Yankees and, with the exception of the fancy plastic injection moulded cases from W Industries, we haven't really added anything new to the formula.

Until now, that is. By the time you read this, Dimension International, who's Superscape system has already been covered in ACE, will have announced their VR Toolkit at the London Virtual Reality Conference – a system that offers major advances over similar products from Sense8 and VPL. You can read more about the Toolkit elsewhere on this page, and more about the conference in the next issue.

Furthermore, a British inventor by the name of William Johnson claims to have overcome one of the most serious drawbacks of VR systems – the limited resolution of the goggles.

William Johnson is in touch with a major hardware company in the computer entertainment field (a non-disclosure agreement prevents us from naming names, however) and many other VR developers are showing considerable interest in the GoggleVox (see below). And as for Dimension International, well – what would you expect from the company who turned their in-house Freescape games development system into the 3D Construction Kit?

#### GOGGLEVOX

To date, one of the most honest bug-bearers for VR developers has been the display. Think about it – if you plop your nose up against a monitor displaying a pleasing resolution of, say, 600 by 400, what do you get? Loads of ugly great pixels, a display fragmented into red, green and blue dots, and a fine red line. Not a happy state of affairs.

Johnson has only one accidental interest in VR, but the man who's already won international awards for his inventions (including the Adidas Microspace for joggers and, last year, a revolutionary new jet-ski called The Flying Frog) recently became fascinated by portable colour TVs. His idea was to take the screens, stick them together in a stereoscopic pair, and build them into a pair of goggles, providing airline passengers, snowboarders, and council officials with something to do in their spare time – watch personal TV in stereo, without disturbing their environment.

Currently the maximum pixel resolution of portable colour LCD TV screens are around 11000 pixels, which would approximately equate in pixel terms to a computer display of around 400x300. In qualitative terms, the LCD display would appear to be in a higher resolution because of the smaller scale and the unlimited colour palette of analogue video. New models planned for this summer will push that figure up to around 425x325 – a noticeable improvement.



Johnson's new vision goggles can be used for a wide range of applications, from personal stereo to data communications. The goggles are also available in a more powerful version, which will be used with the GoggleVox system using a conventional TV screen.

# DIY VR!

To overcome the fragmented display problem when using close range viewing in goggles, Johnson hit on the simple idea of adding a high quality diffuser. The first attempts simply ended up in blurred images. However, by carefully adjusting the distance between the eye and the screen, by carefully adjusting the focal length and performance of the intermediary focussing screen, and by careful specification and manufacture of the diffuser, Johnson has managed to come up with a display that is only a few degrees short of complete acceptability – and it offers a considerably higher resolution than most current VR goggle systems. The final production version of the GoggleVox, he tells us, will feature a new diffusion system and the unit is planned to sell for under £300 – which compares pretty well with the thousands of dollars required for the competition.

Provided that final, small leap in quality is achieved, there is little doubt that this system will emerge as a peripheral for at least one major 16-bit format in the very near future. Personal VR could be with us sooner than we think...

#### VR TOOLKIT

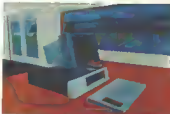
Meanwhile, with your GoggleVox strapped in place, how will you be generating your own virtual realities in glorious stereo vision?

Quite possibly with a scaled down version of Dimension International's VR Toolkit. This is the first VR system produced by games programmers (Dimension is part of the incentive group) and it shows. First, instead of a complex series of C Routines (which is what you'd get with Sense8's World Tool Kit), you get an easy to use icon-driven VR editor. This gives you control over a host of interactive features, many of which – despite the professional market that the VR Toolkit is aimed at – hurt broadly all games applications.

"Multiple Moving Objects with realistic physical movement model incorporating friction, gravity, collisions, and restitution...Objects may launch projectiles which can behave independently"

Stick that in your architectural simulation, sonny. The system is currently tailored for a 486 PC and on that it delivers, amongst other things, a variable frame rate up to 70fps (a more realistic rate for complex environments at 50Hz would be around 15fps), a display of 640x480 with 256 colours, multiple mobile light sources (perfect for multi-solar systems in deep space), powerful animation routines, and complete object interaction. You can scale your world in any unit you like, but supposing you assigned the value of 1 millimetre to the smallest element, the system could cope with – gasp – an environment the size of the British Isles. VR Mega-Castlemaster is just around the corner!

**Fancy a DIY VR system on your PC, Amiga, or ST? It could be closer than you think. Steve Cooke reports on the latest developments...**



One attractive feature of the VR Toolkit is that – unlike most of its competitors – even the largest environments can be held as a single universe, rather than having to link them together using gateways. Thus the designer can create transparent windows within buildings that actually look out onto the street.

# DOUBLE VALUE FOR

## TWO DISKS FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

That's right. At no extra cost, the June issue of CU AMIGA will boast not one but **TWO** action-packed disks of white-hot AMIGA entertainment. Unlike other Amiga magazines, who put up their prices whenever they include an extra disk, there **WILL BE NO PRICE INCREASE WHATSOEVER. Two disks for only £2.95!**

But that's not all. Our June issue will be every games player's dream. Weighing in at a massive 180-pages, the mag will be pecked with all the usual top-quality news, in-depth

previews, exclusive reviews and as many hints and tips as we can cram in.

We'll also be **ADDING** to the magazine by bringing you a whole wealth of entertaining articles that tell you exactly how to get the very best from your computer. And that's not even counting a special 24-page supplement that takes a close up look at the world's best home computer.

Remember: Double the value, double the coverage, and at no extra cost to the readers.

### PARTY TIME

To help celebrate the changes happening to CU we've lined up a double disk of the best in Amiga entertainment, utilities and programs. For starters we've got **A WHOLE GAME**. Not just any game, mind you. Those lovely people at Microsoft have given us **GRAVITY**, a smash hit and one of the best sci-fi arcade strategy games ever. Believe us, you ain't seen nothing yet! What's more we've also lined up a playable level of Core's brand new **Ikan Warriors**-type blaster, **Warzone** - a game that'll literally blow you away. On top of all that, we've also got lots of brilliant utilities that'll let you get the most out of



your Amiga. Learn how to program, create graphics and sample sounds - we'll help you unleash the power in your Amiga!

Still in a party mood, we've also commissioned a 24-page supplement which'll tell you all you need to know about the Amiga. Each page will be crammed with useful information, tips and a run down on which software programs get the CU seal of approval.

### WHAT'S NEW?

We aim to be the Ultimate Guide to the Ultimate Computer. We're also going to make computing fun. Each month we'll be taking a look at all the new hardware and software packages in an authoritative and comprehensive manner. We'll guide you through each package, tell you how to use it in easy-to-follow guides, in a manner which will be ideal for the beginner and satisfying for the enthusiast.

**AND DON'T FORGET!**  
UNLIKE OTHER MAGAZINES WHICH PUT UP THEIR PRICES WHEN THEY INCLUDE AN EXTRA DISK, CU WILL STILL BE ONLY £2.95.

### AMOS

AMOS has quickly established itself as the top programming language for the Amiga. We'll be showing you how to get the most out of AMOS and keeping you informed of all new developments and updates. Look out for a special feature on AMOS 3D, soon to be whizzing its way into the softshops.

### Q&A

queries into hand at solving virus infection expansions

### GRA

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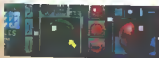
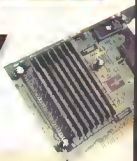
### PD

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# E FOR MONEY



## Q&A

Got a problem? Then send your queries into our new Technical Editor who's a dab hand at solving anything from printer problems and virus infections to advice on the best memory expansions or DTP packages

## GRAPHICS

We'll be taking a look at state-of-the-art graphics on the Amiga.

We'll show you exactly what your machine is capable of and feature the work of top graphic artists in a fun section which will tell you everything you need to know



## SOUND

Fancy adding a backing track to the game you've created on AMOS? Or sampling bits of music from top albums or CDs? We'll tell you how it's done

## PD

We've already got the best PD section in any mag, but it's just got better. From our next issue we'll also be covering all the best PD utilities – some of which are better than full-price software!

## HARDWARE

From memory expansions to colour printers, each month CU will tell you which are the best buys and show you how they work. We'll be sorting out the good from the dross. All of our reviews will make comparisons to similarly priced items, and we'll tell you exactly how useful they are

## CDTV

Set to revolutionise the home computer, Commodore's CDTV will take Amiga owners into the forefront of the computer revolution. Each month we'll show you the latest games, the best software, and keep you up-to-date on just when you can get your hands on the CDTV expansion pack.

## EDUCATION

The boom in education software has thrown up an increasing number of education programs. Our new review section will cover all the new releases

CU Amiga scoops the world with an exclusive in-depth look at Electronic Art's amazing new graphics package – **DELUXE PAINT 4**. Stand by to be amazed.

## EXCLUSIVE-D-PAINT 4



# CU AMIGA

THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE AMIGA

180 PAGES, 2 DISKS,  
24 PAGE SUPPLEMENT,  
ALL FOR £2.95.

WHAT MORE CAN WE SAY!  
ON SALE 26TH MAY

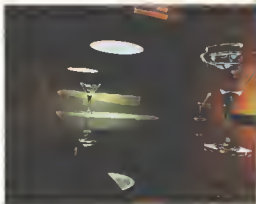


Computer graphics are blurring the line between reality and artifice. ACE visits the Imagina festival and looks at the state of the Art

**F**rom humble beginnings exactly one decade ago, the Imagina computer graphics festival has blossomed from a sideshow to the Monte Carlo film and TV conference into an internationally renowned event, bringing together professionals from every area of computer graphics.

Everyone who is anyone in computer graphics meets there to exchange ideas, present lectures and seminars on the latest ground-breaking techniques, and to dazzle each other with images and films, the like of which most people have never seen, or are capable of conceiving! In short, it is the place to be for anyone even remotely interested in the art of computers.

When people hear the phrase 'computer graphics', most immediately think of video games, or movie special effects. They are covered in detail at Imagina, but just as fascinating is the side that the public never see - the cutting-edge work of research and development teams.

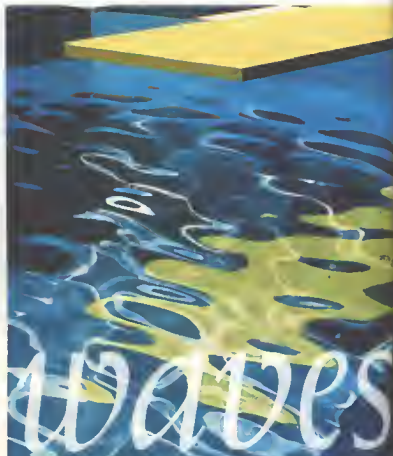


Until recently, computer generated images would often be instantly recognisable as machine-made - stark, solid cubes or pyramids, crudely stuck together and moving in rigid, 'artificial' ways. This is no longer the case.

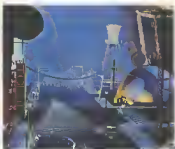
Now it is possible to create objects which are as smooth as you want them to be, under lighting as gentle as required, and animate

them with the grace and atmosphere of the most carefully choreographed dance. The phenomenal processing power available to research establishments or large companies banishes artificiality, allowing today's computer artists a freedom of expression and a range of creative possibilities that have never existed before.

# MICRO





[illegible]

Secree Scott's Best Prize winner of the TV car data category. Data is a unique combination of a visually stunning blend of colors.

A variety of in-aircraft remedies of the magdalen variety do turn out to be as good as the screen.



The Puppet won Best Film in the 3D Action film category.



## MAKING A SPLASH

Amongst the most impressive of this year's works was a film entitled 'Splash Dance' from the Apple research team, and some readers might have seen an extract from it on BBC 1's *Tomorrow's World*. It was only a minute long, but it represented the fruits of a year's study into the behaviour of water, and contained sequences of breathtaking realism. The water flowed, rippled and splashed into simulated valleys, cascading over bunnies and forming pools in the hollows. The water's surface glittered with reflected light, and it was difficult to believe that this was an artificial simulation.

That particular film won the research category of the prestigious Prix d'Âna awards, a ceremony held at the end of the festival (see 'The Gold Envelope Please.' box). These highly-coveted trophies were awarded in ten categories according to the audience's votes and were presented by Prince Albert of Monaco.

Another watery film from Britain's Mark Watt demonstrated a different property of this substance that holds much fascination for simulation scientists. His research into 'water caustics' is pioneering, and helped produce his short animation of a swimming pool and the rippling areas of intense light below the surface.

● Matthew Tizard



The magic duels of famous fiction characters may no longer exist in the real world of their film screens. These 'apathetic actors' need a different computer-generated look to the real thing. See why I thought, ah?



**Oz's left:**  
Don Quixote tie-Jed Price  
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longer since getting rid of the  
classic tale than his  
showdown with the pop-  
star. See it all.

**[Left]**  
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Hanna-Barbera 1st Prize  
winner is the Spirit of  
Efficiency that down is  
thought is



# THE GOLD ENVELOPE PLEASE...

Here are the winners and runners-up in the Pixel INA awards. One can only hope that the films will be shown on T.V. at some point and exposed to a wider audience: they have to be seen to be believed.

## RESEARCH

### 1st Prize and Grand Prix

**'Splash Dance'**  
Apple Computers, USA.  
A stunning piece showing the latest in realistic simulation of water as it flows over rough and abundant surfaces.

### 2nd Prize

**'A Posing Show'**  
Devco Machinery Lab, Japan.  
The fourth in an on-going series of films by this team, exploring the convincing rendering of street scenes. It is set at night and contains some incredible shots of cars and their head-lamps reflecting off a wet road surface after a storm.

### 3rd Prize

**'The Portent of Mr Metastab'**  
Mitsui Corp, Japan.  
An evocative look at the human body - particularly that of the group - proletarian. More seriously, the film deals with the problems associated with representing somebody (especially in 3D) as a form. It contains an amazing sequence which is effectively a solid version of the cover of Queen's 'The Miracle' album - five heads joined together and spinning.

## TELEVISION CREDITS

### 1st Prize

**'Cranialia'**  
ABC TV Graphic Design, Great Britain.  
The remarkable opening sequence to this history programme.

### 2nd Prize

**'ABC's World of Discovery'**  
Metropolitan, Seattle, USA.

### 3rd Prize

**'Saturn Street'**  
Ruth France.

## SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES

### 1st Prize

**'The Poetry of Erik Järvi'**  
Edu World, Finland.  
This film was produced on an Amiga 2000, which just goes to show that budding computer artists without access to a mainframe need not be discouraged. It simply shows a collection of mouths which take turns to read extracts from Järvi's distinctive 'sound poetry'. An extremely disturbing experience.

### 2nd Prize

**'Munoz'**  
Adam Strosser, Finland.  
A surreal dinner party, where nothing retains its expected physical properties for very long, the table liquefies and the level of perspective is frequently dislocated.

### 3rd Prize

**'Women and Jesus'**  
ADS Centre de Formation, France.  
A light-hearted reworking of Shakespeare's balcony scene.

# MICROWAVES



**'In Search of Muscular Art'**  
2nd Prize in the 3D Animation category.

## ART

### 1st Prize

**'Eddy'**  
Yoshio Kawaguchi, Japan.  
A eerie and haunting vision of biological organisms as they might exist elsewhere in the cosmos.

### 2nd Prize

**'Tactata'**  
Sébastien, France.  
A digital surrealism, alluded by liquid entities whose bodies refuse to stay in one shape.

### 3rd Prize

**'Memory'**  
John Hales, Hungary.  
A minimalist piece of art, using shape and texture to good effect.

## 3D ANIMATION

### 1st Prize

**'Panopse'**  
Thinking Machines Corp, USA.  
A visually spectacular panoply of oddity. Strange elements meet pools that are capable of travelling interstellar distances before they land, burst, and scatter new worlds with more of the same pulsating life. (Also featured on Tomorrow's World.)

### 2nd Prize

**'In Search of Muscular Art'**  
Polygon Pictures, Japan.  
This highly original film shows what appears to be a leap of metal metamorphosing into various different homooid poses in a quest for a physical ideal. At times wryly humorous.

### 3rd Prize

**'The Puppet'**  
Rolf, France.  
Spot-on characterisation of a rude wooden marionette.

## VISUALISATION

### 1st Prize

**'Terra Ego'**  
Alex, Canada.  
A synth based trip around a Jewish New Canadian lifestyle, as yet unbuilt.

### 2nd Prize

**'Alfa Romeo 33'**  
Ex Machina, France.  
Shows the lateral and exterior structure of a car. It even shows the skeleton of the chassis of the tribulation system and the distribution of fuel particles in the engine.

### 3rd Prize

**'A Trip on the Seine'**  
Videogarten, France.  
An impressive trip along the famous French river from source to estuary with all the landmarks along the way. Also to be from London to Brighton in 3 Minutes seen Journey film.

## ADVERTISING

### 1st Prize

**'Mega Ant'**  
RAM, USA.  
An ingenious mix of live footage in a phantasm, and the computerised simulation of a holiday by thousands of insects.

### 2nd Prize

**'Lynal (Toby Decaffeinated Tea)'**  
Rushes, CIL, Great Britain.  
You've all seen this one - the leopard which is selected to be filled with decaffeinated tea. Yes, it WAS computer generated!

### 3rd Prize

**'Lynal (The Goodfellow Kall)'**  
Papier, Canada.  
The timelessly equivalent of fruit flies have a party on a pine.

## FICTION

### 1st Prize

**'The Invisible Man vs. Blind Love'**  
Evolution, France.  
A quite incredible achievement. Recaptures the feel of the old 40's gumshoe movies, and stars the invisible Man as he battles through an office for clues.

### 2nd Prize

**'Sitting Dead Death'**  
McKenna & Salton, USA.  
A dynamically simulated giant pinkish red creature in a city - only the talked superhero Caprice Saraceni can save the human race from destruction. Mass conventional 3D cartoon animation with state of the art 3D graphics. A personal favourite.

### 3rd Prize

**'Doe Quichade'**  
Videogarten, France.  
A modest medium used to tell the tales of legend of Doe Quichade and his sidekick, Seneke Peeta.

## 3D ANIMATION

**1st Prize and European Prize**  
**'Green Movie Movie'**  
Green Movie, Italy.

A condensed history of art told in graphical form.

### 2nd Prize

**'L'Inventeur'**  
Adventure Prods, France.  
Super dot Terry Gilliam-esque metaphor of 'ultraviolet' from Lemons paintings.

### 3rd Prize

**'Well Science'**  
Kauskas, USA.  
Free with fluids.

## SPECIAL EFFECTS

### 1st Prize

**'The Fantastic World of Naama-Barben'**  
Rhythm & Hens, USA.  
Shown as part of the America's smallest city the viewer is flown through a computer generated landscape featuring every Heineken Heineken character from the film to the last scene. The product of two years' work by two different computer graphics houses.

### 2nd Prize

**'The Nature'**  
Links Corp, Japan.  
Computer-generated trees and water emerge in battle skillfully superimposed onto a real life forest.

### 3rd Prize

**'Lemmas'**  
John Gave, Great Britain.  
The sieging Trojans from the TV advert sit at his staff.

# FLAMES OF FREEDOM

Flames of Freedom is available now for your Atari ST and soon for Commodore Amiga



# MASTERS OF STRATEGY

# EAT MY SHORTS

The Simpsons. They're the latest sensation sweeping the nation. You've seen the TV show, bought the T-shirt, now play the coin-op..

## THE SIMPSONS

If you're still using Philip Schofield as a role model, get all your work headed in on time and get up on Sunday mornings to wash the car, do not read on. On the other hand, if you have the propensity to wear loud shirts, are not on first name terms with your hairdresser, have a bedroom like a bomb site, enjoy screaming maniacally in public places and generally are about as cool as hell, then we can safely assume that you watch *The Simpsons*.

The Simpsons? Yes indeed - the Matt Groening cartoon that has captured the imagination of a whole generation of human beings across the World - and turned them into complete bastards! The cartoon that has had the guts to show family life - and nuclear power - exactly how it is... explosive. And it's incredibly funny to boot. (No it's not. It's rubbish.) Ed And, of course, it was only a matter of time before a series that successful turned into a computer game. So here it is, from Konami.

Now, Konami has had a great deal of success with licensed characters recently. Well, four licensed characters to be precise. Four Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, to be right on the money... as you can imagine. In fact, their four player game using these little sprites as the main characters was a real money spinner.

But these were characters that were heaven sent for coin-ops. Already violent little



Chelionates, making a game around oddly shaped Ninja Warriors took all of five minutes to come up with. But the Simpsons? A fight to the death in the sitting room perhaps, with each of you taking the part of a family member? Or you play the role of Homer in the nuclear plant, and have to juggle the different shades of radioactive waste material that roll down a conveyor belt, before critical mass is achieved?

So what innovative scenario have Konami come up with to bring out the unique nature of this licensed property? Ninja Turtles II, with Simpsons sprites, that's what. Yes, it's another four player beat 'em up. Yawn...

I guess that Konami must think that after one success, they may as well stick to the same formula again. After all, how can they go wrong? To me, that's rather like saying, "I've just had ten pints and feel really good - so obviously what I

need to feel even better, is another pint!"

Silly, given that they've used this tired horzontal scrolling beat-em-up format, luckily for them, given the stylised nature of the Groening graphics, good sampled sound and a little bit of imagination in the use of the characters, *The Simpsons* coin-op isn't a complete disaster.

At the start of the game, you can choose which member of the family you would like to play. Of course, everyone prefers to be Bart... but only one of you can take that hallowed role. If you're playing multi-player and someone's already thrashing the nasties with his skateboard, then you'll have to settle for either Lisa - who raises hell with a skipping rope, Homer who can strike out with his trusty bowling ball or Marge... who cops the wiens around the head with a vacuum cleaner. It may not sound like sitch-splitting hilarity, but it's actually quite funny.

The story goes that the whole family is shopping in Springfield when they witness a *jeu* heist - trouble is, the robbers trip over the family when coming out of the shop, the priceless goodies into the sky in a fruitless arc... and is swallowed by Baby Simpson.

Bad guys forthwith make off with her and the family follows in pursuit. From there on in, it's waves of mean looking guys in the mall, waves - mean looking guys in the foreground and so on, which you, the family, have to lay into. Extra energy, depleted by enemy attacks, can be made up by eating randomly appearing Hamburgers, Pie, Hotdogs, etc. etc.

Gameplay-wise, it's boring - although I encourage you to play it once or twice, as a bit of the true surreal nature of the Simpsons bursts through from time to time. But the real lesson from this is to beware major licensed deals. The big money that the companies have to put up in order to get the rights to use these characters means that no-one is going to take risks making something out of the ordinary. Even if it means betraying the spirit of the original property. The Simpsons will not be as successful as the *Turtles*.



Chelionates Homer meticulously inspects his party, followed, while the Family look to him for guidance. Right.



The Simpsons. Never let a Bill of dollars leave you in the way of a coin.

## HOLGOS

The last film to come in forward in Virtual Reality, promises a game with Hologram technology in the arc.

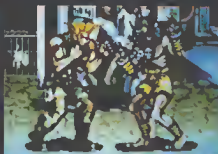
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The nature of, say, D. sequen whooies the game ing on the

The diff true 3D cartoon, R. excellent Sega Euro

More go technology fairly price £70,000 low price

arcades o to you, th Although gameplay this new ing a lot o summer News pag



Left: Top, Middle and Bottom They may not look like movie stars, but when you experience this holographic endeavor, you'll be their friend.

## Street Fighter II - Capcom

Beaten ups are always popular - and now Capcom has produced one with more fire buttons than a squadron full of alien TIE fighters. Complex, masses of animations and not a little wit - probably most of it wasted - Street Fighter II almost transcends its genre.

## HOLOGRAMS IN THE ARCADES

The last few months have been good for the cinema industry. Sega's R360 was a great leap forward in technology - and then W Industries' Virtual Reality Con-Op emerged, full of great promise. Now Sega are fighting back again, with a game where you play with animated holograms. And the first game using this technology, Hologram Time Traveller, will be out in the arcades in, they say, July.

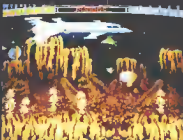
Licensed exclusively by Sega from an original S company, Time Traveller uses set live footage of real actors and action film in a Hollywood studio and captured on Laserdisc. This is displayed on a monitor as per usual - but the film, projected onto the playing plinth of the unit, using a special lens... which means you see the game as real 3D (like people, running around, directed by you).

The nature of the gameplay is similar to that of, say, Dragon's Lair - there you had set sequences of cartoon animation, with small windows of interaction between the player and the game setting off another sequence, depending on the particular choice made.

The difference here is that all the action is in true 3D - and it's real people rather than a drawn cartoon. Fab or what? With the additional draw of excellent CD quality sound, it's no wonder that Sega Europe's boss Vic Leslie is so excited by imminent launch.

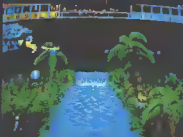
Here good news - while the recent technological wonders in the arcades have been only prey for the operator to buy... almost \$1,000 for the R360... the hologram unit is priced enough that even the smallest arcades can afford it - and not change the earth - you, the player.

Though the semi-interactive nature of the gameplay will limit the types of game available on new unit - there's no doubt that we'll be seeing a lot of these in the arcade later this summer. For more information, investigate the next pages this month.



## Strike Force - Midway

How could they do this to me? Defender II appears almost ten years after the original classic... and it's a load of old tosh. Wildly depressing for the same hopie fans of way back maybe those who never saw it may find something in this break dancing, hip-hop, get down version.



## Cotton - Sega

(Below): It's nice to know that even the biggest companies can go loopy from time to time. Think of Cotton as Nemo's, but using a cute heroine witch instead of a spacehopper, and fumes instead of power-ups. Nurse, the screens...

Farther instead of power-ups? What is the world coming to? Well, it makes a nice change from all these glowing gods.



# SARAKON



## SIMPLY ADDICTIVE



AVAILABLE ON IBM PC (VGA · EGA · TGA)  
AMIGA · ATARI ST · CBM 64 (DISC & TAPE)



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# SCREEN TEST



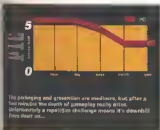
Heart of China, premixed by Sierra to be the most impressive game on the PC this year. Page 58



Warzone: Can Core repeat their recent success with this wheelbarrowed shoot-out?

## IT TAKES ALL SORTS

And that fact is rarely more evident than when discussing games. One man's meat is more often than not another's poison. And when hyperbole and superlatives fill the air like so many noxious human emissions, it's easy to become desensitized to the real feel of the review. Here at ACE, we try to be a little more conservative in our approach. You won't find wasted words here. ACE reviews aim to be level-headed and analytical. But that doesn't mean we don't get excited about the games we see. We simply make sure we get excited about the right ones.



The PIC - Predicted Interest Curve  
- Is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenalin level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. And this can tell you a lot more about a game than just the interest levels...

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into. Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

We won't rate a game unless it represents what you'll find on the shelves. If a game's not finished, we won't rate it. Instead we give it an ACE Preview verdict panel that tells you how we think it's shaping up. In most cases, a full review of the finished game will follow in a later issue.



## ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards seals of approval for outstanding software performance. If a game really breaks the boundaries in sound, graphics, or originality you'll see the appropriate ACE Award flash on the review. Unless it's truly dire - in which case it'll get the ACE Turkey award. Software houses you have been warned!



ACE only awards this one to games of outstanding quality. A 90% game is a classic BGA, recommended without hesitation.



Originality counts for a lot these days, and any games that have it deserve a special mention. This ACE award is reserved specifically for these rare games.



One of the first things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that redefine the state-of-the-art get this seal of approval from ACE.



Sound is the 'forgotten' aspect of games - but can make or break them. ACE only awards this one to brilliant use of audio in a game.

## THE LINE UP

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Plus many more that won't even fit on the list!

# HEART OF CHINA IN A

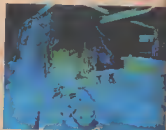


**Computerised movies  
come a step closer thanks  
to DYNAMIX**

**D**espite what you might think, there is currently only one software company making the so-called 'interactive movies'. When you think about it, King's Quest V and Space Quest IV are just advanced adventure games with fancy graphics and flesh sound.

The closest anyone has come to creating a film on a computer was Dynamix, several years ago, with David Wolf: Secret Agent. Even that, however, was just five sub-games separated by some lengthy digitised scenes. What it did do though was offer a glimpse into the future of gaming technology and with *Heart Of China*, it looks very much as though that future has finally arrived and once again, Dynamix's name is at the front. Fortunately for Sierra, it also happens to be one of its affiliated labels.

Set in the late 1920s, the golden time of high adventure, *Heart Of China* puts you in the shoes of 'Lucky' Jake Masters, a down on his luck pilot that's become a little too friendly with this bottle.



Short of work (and money) you accept the task of finding society gal Kate Lomax, the kidnapped daughter of a wealthy American businessman. Unfortunately, the last time anyone saw her, she was being carried off in the direction of revolutionary China. Nothing for it then to fire up your engines and get your plane in the air.

Anyone who has seen Tom Selleck's film *High Road To China* is by now shouting 'seen it before', well, yes the plot, settings and characters are all very similar, but gamewise this is more like an early Indiana Jones adventure than anything else. Anyway, when was the last time you saw a truly original plot in a computer game?

It's rare to find a game that is solely about the search for a missing person. The help of Z... ends up... thing ab... switch cl... and once... get back... through... feeling d... solving s...

The ord... like a m... very non... boxes ar... adventure... being ab... to the sa... multiple...

Of cou... of linear... difference... that mos... way of b... different... by giving... different...





Will you just look at these graphics? Every one has been hand digitized or hand painted from images of real actors. And guess what? All the locations are full of atmosphere and the characters have genuine, well, character. Impressed? You should be.



It's rare that an action movie will concentrate solely on one character and this is where *Heart Of China* just adds to it's film-like quality. While searching for the elusive Kate, you'll enlist the help of Zhao Che, a shadowy naga that inevitably ends up acting like a typical sidekick. The nice thing about this is that at any time you can switch characters and control either Jake or Che and once you've rescued Kate and are trying to get back home, you have the option to switch through all three. This allows for a much greater feeling of interactivity and is often essential for solving some of the puzzles.

Of course, every game has to have some more like a more than a standard adventure, is the very non-linear feel to things. No matter what bones and press blurbs tell you, almost every adventure has only one correct path to it (simply being able to take two or three different routes to the same building does not really count as multiple solutions).

Of course, every game has to have some sort of linear plot running through it, but the difference *Heart Of China* has to other games is that most of the puzzles have more than one way of being solved, more often than not using different characters. I won't spoil your enjoyment by giving examples, but there are at least four different endings that can be played, each



depending on how you dealt with earlier events.

As is almost Dynamid's wont, the graphic and some quality of *Heart Of China* overtake everything else before it. This seems to happen every time a new game is released and, of course, is good news for the punter. The digitized graphics work extremely well and excellently blend with the background artwork, to the point that you'd think they weren't two separate entities.

Unfortunately (and *Space Quest IV* is a culprit here), these aesthetic delights often have the effect of making the actual game very short. No such worries here, *Heart Of China* has plenty to keep it going. The arcade sections come as a

## AND WHY NOT.

The use of over 80 actors and actresses coupled with the professional back-stage crew (cameramen, sound technicians, make-up artists, costumers etc.) make *Heart Of China* one of the closest things to a real interactive movie yet seen. This raises the question, how long before magazine reviews become like Barry Norman and Film 55, with reviewers criticising the quality of the characters and the acting instead of the gameplay? Also, will we be seeing more famous actors playing the parts? Wouldn't it be nice if the next Indiana Jones adventure had a digitized Harrison Ford running around? Sorry, I still don't think that that day is too far away and with their kind of track record to go on, who knows?

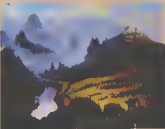


One of the few truly playable adventures. In the same sense that you'd have a vague idea that you can watch a good film near and dear again, *Heart Of China* has plenty of variety to make you want to play it again and again.



## RELEASE DETAILS

IBM PC EAD/IS OUT NOW



welcome break and are good enough to present a challenge. Adventure punts will now turn away in disgust saying 'why include arcade games?'. What they do do is to the film atmosphere that has been consistently generated throughout.

When you watch a film that contains, let's say, a shoot-out, the tension in the audience goes up because you know that at any point one of our heroes could be shot. When you play the computer game license and you reach the shoot-out scene, which would be more entertaining? Typing (or in this case clicking) the command 'Kill Bad Guys', or actually taking hold of the gun and shooting it out. Rather than type 'Drive Tank Down Mountain' wouldn't you want to take the

controls and drive it yourself? Simply put, to capture the feel of an action film, you need to have action in the game.

The various arcade sections include the aforementioned Tank battle (using Dynamix's innovative 3Space, seen in *Red Baron* and *A10 Tank Killer*), a camel chase and a fight on top of a moving train (yes, I know it's corny but everybody else does it). They're all a little tricky to complete but thankfully you get the option to skip past them if you fail too often. Of course, whether you want to take this easy way out is your choice.

Ultimately it's going to be the price that harms *Heart Of China* most, which is a shame as it is one of those games that has to be played to be believed. Until the high production costs can be overcome, or the public starts to take more notice of the games and the companies start making as much money from them as from a film, the price is going to stay high.

Of course, with CD-ROM starting to make genuine inroads in the computer industry, Sierra are taking the idea very seriously and it won't be long before Jake Masters is adventuring with real speech to go with the graphics. When that happens the 'interactive movie' will have truly arrived and interest should soar. As it stands, we are currently in the silent movie era, but growing fast.

● Paul Presley

# HEART OF C H I N A



Lucky by name and truly by nature, Jake Masters is enjoying a typical American here should be, right down to the unaffordable hair.



*Heart of China* is a significant breakthrough in the interactive storytelling genre. Distinct from previous titles like *Fire of the Dragon* and *Sphere of Power*, it is both a massive tale packed with gripping plot and fabulous special effects, but also contains a truly narrative storyline, which leads the player through the adventure world, leaving them thundering in awe (if any) situations. There are lessons for us all in the relentless storytelling and research which Dynamix put into their games.



Sid Meier's

# RAILROAD TYCOON



**MICRO PROSE**  
SIMULATION SOFTWARE

**WINNER OF  
BEST PC GAME**

'Golden Joystick Awards'

Now available for Atari ST, Commodore Amiga and IBM PC compatibles.

**A** warning to any die-hard US patriots: before you continue reading, sit down, get a stiff drink, put "The Star-Spangled Banner" on the stereo, clutch "Old Glory" to your breast and get ready to wipe away the tears of anguish and out rage, because...

America has been invaded.

Yep, you read it right. Part of the good 'ol US of A is under occupation by an enemy army. A group of South American countries, for years engaged in a secret Drug War, have united together under the banner of the Latin American Revolutionary Alliance (LARA) and invaded the West Coast of an America grown complacent and under-defended due to the collapse of Communism.

Full-scale retaliation and the use of nuclear weapons is clearly impossible: civilian casualties would be unacceptably high. Thus the war has become one of attrition, each side constantly gnawing at each other's resources. As pilot of the US's most-advanced fighter, the F-230 "Black Widow," it's up to you to make America a Land of the Free once more.

#### THE SAME OLD SONG?

PC flight sims seem to appear more regularly than Peter Dinkov on TV chat shows. Isn't there a risk of everyone getting a bit sick of them? Well, if they're as good as *Jetfighter II*, the answer is definitely no.

The game comes packaged in unique packaging that is supposed to resemble a jet's cockpit. It's very clever and catches the eye (if you're not careful) - the only trouble is that once opened the box is near impossible to close again! Inside are 5.25" and 3.5" floppies and a well-produced manual.

Don't bother with the manual's short-story intro: it's the biggest load of rancid gunglio guff I've ever read. But the rest is great, with a well thought-out tutorial that guides you painlessly through free flight to take-offs and landings (both visual and instrument guided) to air-to-air and air-to-ground combat.

The most immediately impressing thing about *Jetfighter II* is its superb graphics. It's no surprise that the filled-polygons are fast and highly detailed - to compete in today's market they've

#### WAA! MACHINES HAVE AN EDGE

For maximum enjoyment, *Velocity* recommends that *Jetfighter II* be run on 60MHz PCs running at 12 MHz or higher. However, there are systems that turn off some of the more processor-intensive effects to speed things up. I found that even on an 8MHz mail with all the bells and whistles the game still ran at an acceptably high speed.

got to be. What really impresses are the extra touches, the realistic object shading which, according to the direction of the sunlight, the subtle hazing effects on distant objects, the beautifully-rendered dawns and sunsets, the windowns on the buildings at night. The 1st goal on and on. Who needs reality with graphics as good as these?

The sound on a basic PC is surprisingly good (well, as good as it could ever be). With a sound board the effects are better, but not outstanding. In fact, in comparison to the high quality of the visuals the sound is frankly a little disappointing. All the booms and bangs you'd expect are there, alright, they just seem to lack 'meat'.

In flight, to stalling without doing a fully complete account of more than a right twiddle.

The core series of a centred area. The users to be briefing, cause the Destroyer.

# JET FIGHTER II ADVANCED TACTICS

Help liberate America  
with **VELOCITY/US  
GOLD's** flight sim

The city by night is a beautiful thing to behold. But doesn't spend too much time sight-seeing. There are dangers! (Well, MIA anyway.)



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THE FIRST WILL

fighter is, as they say, one  
punch, the other light up like a Christmas tree.  
The F-117A, on the other hand, can glide unseen into enemy territory, but is  
about as easy to handle as an oil tanker on greased ice. The lethal  
beauty of the F-23D is that it combines the speed and performance of a  
fighter with the radar invisibility of a stealth bomber without significant  
compromise.

The F-23D gives even the worst pilot a distinct advantage over the enemy craft (I should know, with my flying 'skills'), but masechists who want to stack the odds against themselves can choose to fly an F-14 'Tomcat', F-16 'Falcon' or F/A-18 'Hornet' instead.

# FIGHTER II

## CTICAL FIGHTER



With your flying skills and the F-22's superior firepower, it was the time before America is once again the Land of the Free, the will is...

enemy, but would bombing a main ammo dump cause more long-term harm? You decide.

Having completed the chosen mission successfully or otherwise, you have to mobilise and spend a reprisal attack (maybe having to splash a stolen F-23 or eliminate two incoming cruise missiles, for example). Perform well in this brutal game of high-powered Chess and the enemy forces will be pushed back a bit. Do badly and... well, do I have to spell it out? The ultimate aim is to finally drive the enemy into the sea and back to South America. Are you up to the task? More importantly, given the complexity of the graphics, is your PC?

● David Upchurch

[illegible]

Jettfighter II was designed by Bob Dittusman, with longin his career in game design with the arcade company Bally. There he created Discs of Iron, based on the gladiatorial matches between trike-armed combatants in the film *Iron*. (The interested or nostalgic may be interested to know that Loricle recently released a very similar game called *Disc*.)

Bob became interested in producing the most realistic affordable flight sim possible, and towards this end set up MD Technologies, where he created the excellent F/A-12 simulator on the Amiga for Electronic Arts (which shares many of the control features and aesthetic touches of *Jetfighter II*, albeit very pared down) and later *Jetfighter: The Adventure on the PC*.



Year	Percentage of children
1980	4.5
1985	4.5
1990	4.5
1995	4.8
2000	5.5

liked the green inside or grained pattern. Most naturally are instantly practical. Right, taking off or leaving in conditions at airports or at airports or required, while the worst situation could have over the rollers. Some think they have for a couple of months. If you don't have anything in 40 years, you can see one of the 100 second one - I did rollers.

**IBM PC**

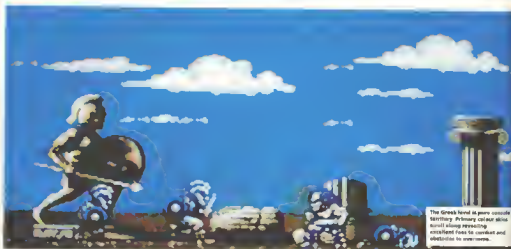
Shugart's *IBM PC* is a... (text continues)

#### RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	ETIA	TSA
IBM PC	ETB	OUT NOW



Before each mission, you're given a briefing and a satellite overview of the north area with my location of report marked. Starting against the mission, you're taken on a dizzying ride down through the stratosphere to your waiting jet's cockpit.



# MYTH



[right top] Hercules from the well-known 1981 counterpart, the action in the 16-bit version is unimpaired, to say the least.

[right bottom] Screen 21. Annotated on all sides, our muscle-bound hero brandishes his sword in a flurry of white-line activity.



One of the best received 8-Bit original products of last year is currently being transformed into a 16-Bit opus. How's it going for SYSTEM 3?

The original premise for Myth - a contemporary hero placed into an extraordinary fantasy world, pitted against all manner of incredible beasts - was perhaps, along with the excellent graphics, the game's main appeal. It made a nice change to control a believable and vulnerable character as opposed to yet another muscle-bound clod who looks tougher than anyone else in the game.

So, it's perhaps a surprise that System 3 have opted for exactly that approach, doing away with Mr Average and instead bestowing a hefty sword and amazing musculature upon the player. The

decision to opt for a more steroids-and-fantasy angle, these at the System claim, will widen the game's appeal for the 16 bit and console market.

Myth is now a 50/50 mix of hack'n'slash carnage and object orientated puzzle solving. The player must perform a series of historic tasks through a suite of historic settings, defending himself from attack from all manner of bestial creatures.

Another distinction from the 8-Bit game is that the action takes place on a much larger scale. Owing to scrolling limitations on the lesser machines, most of the action for a level would be kept on a set of around five screens. The benefit of this is that the player can plan their route through a stage more effectively, since they are afforded a better overview of the level. The 16-Bit versions, while offering much more attractive larger graphics which scroll continually, keeping the hero in the centre of the screen at all times, don't allow such forward planning.

The result is that the game will play on a much more instantaneous level, with the player reacting to situations rather than planning them, an appealing prospect for fans of heart stopping reflex-play, but perhaps not destined to be regarded as a change for the better among the thinking set.

### ACE PREPLAY

• Excellent console style graphics and gameplay  
 • Ability to zoom  
 • My "average" feel

• Lack of the impression of scale  
 • Less action on the thinking, more on the action.

### Kelenna Details

AMIGA	£25.99	Buy
ST	£25.99	Buy

THE  
**One**

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AN EMAP IMAGES  
PUBLICATION

ISSUE 33 • JUNE 1991

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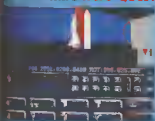
# ST GAMES

## BUCKLE YOUR SWASH!

Lucasfilm Lets Rip With  
The Secret Of **Monkey Island**



**GET ON 'BOARD'**  
With Gremlin's **Hero Quest**



**NEW DIMENSION!**  
Build A World Of Your Own -  
Ark's 3D Construction Kit

**IF Your Disk is Missing  
- Consult Your Newsagent**

## LEARN TO DRIVE!

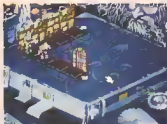
500cc of Raw Power from Gremlin  
A Complete 'Trainer' Level for Team Suzuki

**Plus!**

The Brain-Busting Challenge of Rainbow Arts' Logical  
And... By Popular Demand  
For the First Time Ever!  
Watch the Kick Off 2 Goal-den Goal  
In the Comfort of Your Own Home!







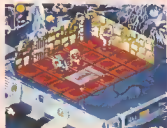
Doing the Zombie shuffle in the dark and dank corridors of Morcar's dungeons. This looks like he needs to get out in the sun a bit more. He's as pale as a ghost!

**B**oard games. Don't you just hate 'em? They conjure up bad memories of wet summer holiday afternoons, trapped in the house with a little brother who forces you, much against your better judgement, to play yet another game of Monopoly. Then, as soon as you start winning, he throws linbuns, sneaks hotels onto his properties and tries to steal money from the bank when your back's turned. Fortunately this computer version of the top-selling RPG allows you to eliminate any annoying siblings altogether.

Hero Quest is a game for one to four players, each controlling characters with differing strength and intelligence capabilities. For example, the Wizard and Elf, although relatively feeble in comparison to the Dwarf and Barbarian, have the ability to cast a variety of spells.

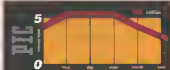


The ever-evil Morcar himself. Played by the computer, he controls the actions of the myriad monsters lurking in the mysterious subterranean labyrinth.



# HEROQUEST

**All a-board! Lost pieces and cheating kid brothers are a thing of the past with GREMLIN's RPG tie-in**



Hero Quest is almost instantly playable and fourteen quests should keep you glued to the screen for a long time. Anyways, having four more should keep that open space for the expansion disks and for release in the next few months.

**MS-DOS**  
**815**

**AMIGA**

A well-designed legend and attractive graphics and cutting sounds also create a superb play on the Amiga environment. All these plus a large number of treasure chests make it a highly original and compelling challenge to systems gamers in the world.

#### RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£25.53	OUT NOW
ATARI/ST	£25.53	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£25.53	IMMINENT

The brave adventurer's must complete fourteen quests, each set in a large dungeon populated by the forces of Chaos, and culminating in a big showdown with the evil magician Morcar. The board game required one person to play the role of Morcar but here the computer controls all his actions and movements.

The game begins with an excellent intro and a catchy atmospheric soundtrack. Before each quest there's a basic overview of the dangerous task awaiting the brave explorers. The player is then asked to select and customise a character. If playing to your own you can control all the

characters if you want. There's an option to save your current character together with any equipment for use in future missions.

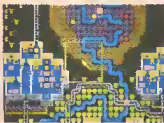
All actions are mouse controlled via an icon-driven menu system. Each location, either a corridor or a room, is divided into a number of movement squares. Player's move in turns, during which they can search for objects, traps or hidden doors, fight the enemy, look at the map, perform actions on items currently being carried, unlock doors or move to neighbouring squares provided they're unoccupied. The number of moves available in each turn is determined by the value displayed on the computer-rolled dice.

During each quest the player will pick up gold coins and precious jewels which can be used to buy new weapons and armour. Magic potions, treasure chests and tool kits are just a few of the many other items waiting to be discovered in the dungeons and, if used properly, add to your playing capabilities.

Hero Quest is one of a few boardgame conversions that give you much more than the original, particularly the advantage (albeit antisocial) that the game can be played by a single player.

Excellent isometric 3D graphics, brilliant sound tracks, enigmatic atmosphere and superb attention to detail make Hero Quest an absolute must for the board-game veterans and all RPG enthusiasts.

© Tim Treadwell-Curtis



In the Old World there were no wars, plagues or disasters. The benevolent ruling Arch Magics cast powerful spells to hold the forces of Chaos at bay. But at a cost. The spells produced harmful side effects: flora and fauna twisted into strange forms and the dead rose from their graves to haunt the living. The populace grew unruly and a great Civil War broke out, splitting the once-peaceful society into many warring factions.

The only survivors were the Magics. They took sanctuary in Limbo and watched as Chaos took reign. Eventually these great wizards grew restless, and each ventured out to conquer the New Worlds to become Lords of Chaos.

LoC is an interactive multi-level strategy adventure for 1-4 players. Each person controls a wizard who must use magical power to overcome the perils peculiar to each world and ultimately to find the other wizards, destroy them and escape back to Limbo.



Is BLADE SOFTWARE at the cutting edge of RPGs?

(Top for left): This screen allows the player to scroll around the game world. (Bottom for left): The Surrealizing Spell screen. Simply click on the monster you want to resist.

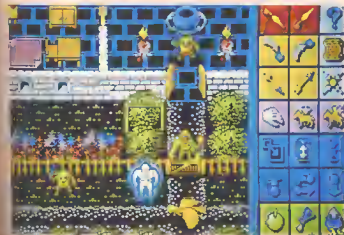
The game is played using a mouse and incorporates a well-designed icon-driven control system. As you move the cursor over the icons and on-screen objects a brief descriptive message appears, which neatly saves you the hassle of constantly referring to the manual.

The screen is divided into three areas, the largest being a window containing an overhead view of the area around the player's wizard, with icons or creature characteristics to the right and a message window section below. Surprisingly, the programmers decided to go for simplistic 2D graphics which, while looking a bit dated, make the game more playable as the player doesn't have to concentrate on confusing movement control often found in flashier 3D graphic masterpieces.

The overall game design strongly resembles a classic board game, with each player moving in 'turns'. The gameplay is entirely strategic and requires no 'arcade' skills. Combat, for example, is resolved by simply comparing the relevant creature's attack and defence ratings with victory going to the creature with the higher score.

A wizard wouldn't be a wizard without his magical powers. At your disposal are 45 spells which vary from world to world and include Magic Bolt, Lightning, Magic Fire, Enchant, Flood and Tangle Vine among many others. You can even summon creatures to do some of your dirty work. All creatures have different characteristics and depending on their nature they can be flown, ridden, used to open doors or recover treasures from dangerous locations.

Whichever creature you're controlling every action it performs uses up a certain number of its own 'Action' and 'Stamina' points. You are



strongly advised to plan your moves well ahead to avoid running out of energy just when a scraps brewing.

Although the basic idea of the game is brilliant, there are some serious presentation drawbacks and the game has the look of a classy 8-bit game. For instance, it would have been nice if combat was accompanied by some fancy animation à la Battle Chess. The use of sound is also far from perfect apart from some dumb speech in the intro and a few grama affects there is nothing but constant silence.

On the whole, LoC is an enjoyable RPG which will provide hours if not weeks of rewarding challenge for dedicated RPG fans and the more casual player seeking a mysterious journey into the world of magic.

© Tom Treacinka-Correll

This is the player's typical view of his action. The top-down graphics may not be the flashiest eye, but at least they're clear and uncluttered.

# THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Fancy meeting a cybernetic cod while riding through the glen? Read on...

## ROBIN HOOD

Longtime readers may remember that some time ago ACE reported that Millennium were working on a novel adventure game with a Populous-like viewpoint set in the rooin' tooin' Wild West. Well, that idea has undergone a few changes in the last few months, and the and cactus-strewn plains of Texas have evolved into the verdant greenery of Nottingham Forest and environs, where Robin and his Merry Band do battle against the nefarious Sheriff and his Norman nasties.

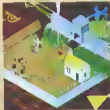
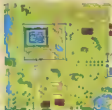
The player, as you'd expect, takes control of the legendary ever to the poor and taker from the rich. Your first task as this famed philanthropist is to seek out Little John, Will Scarlet, Friar Tuck et al and form your band of thieves. Once this has been accomplished you can concentrate on the main job of routing the foul Sheriff from Nottingham Castle.

All game interaction is controlled by mouse. Generally this entails clicking on an icon at the side of the screen and then clicking on one of the character sprites milling about on screen, so that you can do something such as fire an arrow at them, talk to them or follow them. As



(Below right) When two or three are gathered together then you know something important is happening. This icon's not for anything important - it's just an announcement by the Town Crier that Robin is about to be hanged...

(Above) Robin's has the supernatural ability to summon up a plan map of his environment, with the various inhabitants indicated by tiny flashing dots. Robin can be seen to go to any location simply by clicking on it.



the game progresses you'll find extra equipment and acquire magic powers from the pagan god Herne that'll increase the number of control icons and allow you to summon your men with a tool on your horn and even zap a foe with a magic lightning bolt!

The graphics are pretty but full of character - there's no problem recognising who everybody is meant to be. These small sprites and consequent memory savings - mean each can have a fairly varied range of animations. The game itself is great fun, with the citizens all going about their daily business unless Robin steps in to mess things up. There's also a refreshing vein of whimsical humour throughout that makes the game very endearing. Blow the horn, for example, and up pops a speech bubble saying 'Toot! Toot!'

Robin Hood is scheduled for release this October on Amiga, ST and PC, and it has to be said that Millennium's timing really couldn't be better. Due for a Summer release at, as they say, a cinema near you is Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves. Starring (flavour-of-the-month Kevin 'Dances with Wolves' Costner) film pundits reckon the it could be one of this year's big blockbusters. If Hood fever hits Britain, who knows what may happen...? Either way, Robin Hood is sure to become another string to Millennium's bow.

© David Upchurch



(Above left) All four seasons are represented in Robin Hood, there. Robin engages two marks in conversation in the full-completed, store-owned bakery. As construction of the Chertan Temple advances, Robin's pages penance insulate, placing a time limit on his activities.

(Above centre) Each of the small (but perfectly formed) characters in Robin Hood has a comprehensive range of animations. Note the red drop as the bottom left of the screen - and that couldn't be a turtle just below could it? T

(Left) The landscape is constructed, Populous-like, from a series of blocks viewed in an isometric-3D perspective.

## ROBOCOD

Following his ignominious defeat at the fins of Agent Pond, the destitute Doctor Maybe retreated to a secret hideout to sulk. While he sat alone in his darkened refuge, brooding over his shame, a new and even more devilish plan formed in the Doctor's cunning brain: a scheme so dreadful it would bring the whole World to its metaphorical knees.



Far away at a North Pole Toy Factory, Santa Claus was hard at work making toys to bring happy smiles to the faces of the little kiddies come Christmas Day. But Santa's tasks were suddenly halted by the surprise invasion of Doctor Maybe and his gang. The bumbling roly-poly doggoeder stood no chance, and was soon trussed up like the proverbial Christmas Turkey.

Enter Robocod. Half fish. Half machine. All cod. The titanium tuna must enter Santa's workshops, now gone haywire due to the manic machinations of Maybe, and rescue everyone's favourite beandy.

I guess you could call Robocod a sea-quel to James Pond. The new game features ten levels, each split into eight sections. Each section will consist of thirty screens of platform-orientated

thrills - that makes the whole game an incredible 1600 screens big!

Robocod can jump, monkey swing along overhead beams and even stretch his bionic torso to reach high platforms. Each workshop is populated by all manner of toys gone mad and all with a sudden taste for fish. In his defence Robocod wields a vicious-looking mallet.

So far, work seems to be progressing very well. On the Amiga programme and graphic designer Chris Sorrell has achieved some slick full-screen multiway scrolling, and Robocod is just as cute and agile as any Italian plumber you could care to mention. Can the gameplay make the Memo mark? Find out when Robocod appears on Amiga and ST this November.

● David Upchurch



(Far left top): This shows three mobile Santa's toy factory, which acts as a mission start screen. Each discovery leads to a series of platform-style parts.

(Far left Centre): And... straight inside the toy workshop Robocod has an opening.

(Far left bottom): The range of items items waiting to be discovered by the phony plumber is huge. It's amazing how much detail and colour Chris can pack into a tiny 16 x 16 pixel square.

(Far left bottom): Monkey swing, monkey do.

## CHINTO'S REVENGE

Young Chinto is a man with a mission. Many years ago, the evil Dragon Overlord's merciless henchmen raided Chinto's home and in a fit of mindless violence put his parents to the sword. Chinto, too, would have been slain, but the callous villains didn't see the small boy huddled in the darkened corner of the room, watching in terror as his loved ones were cruelly killed.

Left an orphan, Chinto swore revenge against the Overlord and his cronies. While other children played in the streets, the dour Chinto devoted his adolescence to learning the various arts of combat, in order to prepare himself for the day when he would confront the murderers and bring justice down on their heads.

Chinto's Revenge is an arcade adventure with an overhead scrolling Gauntlet-like view of the action. Interestingly, the game is based around just one big level made up of 400 screens of woods, towers and castles. Millennium boss Ian Sawyer claims it takes three minutes to scroll uninterrupted from one side of the map to the other. In addition there are several small sub-levels, like caves and dungeons, to discover.

Programmer Wing Lai, who previously wrote

Microprose Soccer and Millennium's Cloud Kingdoms on the Amiga and ST, is programming the game on a battered 1040ST. His biggest headache so far has been maintaining a screen update of 25 frames per second while software scrolling the screen and moving the sprites (of which there can be up to four 48x32 pixel man

characters and four 16x16 pixel missiles on screen at any one time). On the hardware-laden Amiga this should be less of a problem, resulting in larger scroll area and animated backgrounds.

Chinto's Revenge is due for a July release on Amiga and ST.

● David Upchurch



(Above): All the action is viewed in an interesting and different top-down perspective, hence the playful out wits (what Ian Sawyer calls 'the Tellerone effect') and the large headstart for characters.

(Left): The atmospheric and graphically stylish intro sequence explains the origin of tragic Chinto's quest for revenge.



The 16-colour backgrounds are built up from a range of 16 x 16 pixel square 'tiles', which can then be fitted together in a variety of permutations. All the graphics have been designed by Paul Delaney and Rob Chapman.



# LOGICAL

**What a lot of spherical objects! You'll need all your marbles to cope with RAINBOW ARTS' fascinating fast-action puzzler**

**L**ogical is a bit of a ranty, a thought-provoking fast-action game which is genuinely as addictive as the blurb claims. OK, it's derived from dozens of vaguely similar titles - Tetris, Puznik, even Marble Madness if you want to look at it that way, but the finished game seems wholly original and is a terrific challenge.

There's a sensible copy-protection system depending on a coloured code card (remember Jet Set Willy), once through that you're straight into the ball-rolling action.

Along the top of the screen runs a track, along the track come coloured marbles which drop down channels into revolving disks. Each disk has four marble slots, and is connected to other disks by further channels.

Your task is to rotate the disks (by clicking with the right mouse button) and launch the marbles (click left) in such a way that each disk on the screen becomes filled with four marbles of the same colour. Do that and the disk explodes (though it remains working), once all the disks are exploded, you move on to the next of the 99 levels.

It sounds too simple to hold any challenge, but of course there are complications. One display shows how many marbles are in motion, more than four, and you cannot launch any new ones. There's a time limit for each level (at course); and other elements include colour stoppers which only let through marbles of a particular colour, changers which alter the colour of marbles passing through, direction arrows which turn some channels into one-way streets, traffic lights which dictate the colour of marble which must be used to fill a particular disk, and colour handicaps which dictate that you have to fill a disk with a particular combination of colours.

There are some aids too; teleporters which allow you to jump marbles vertically or horizontally, and a preview display which tells you the colour of the next marble coming. Scores depend on the speed with which you finish the level, and any colour handicap bonuses you have racked up; at each level you are given a password which

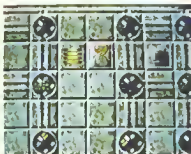
allows you to restart the game at the furthest point you have reached, and if you complete all 99 levels you can access a screen editor which allows you to create your own Logical puzzles.

With excellent graphics (in a choice of four styles), good music and sound effects and compelling gameplay, Logical is going to give you some sleepless nights.

• Chris Jenkins

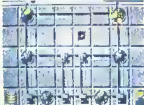


Between each level you're given a preview of the challenges ahead and a recap on the scores on the disks and the number of lines remaining.



(Above) Everything you need to know is provided graphically. That purple square, for example, tells you the colour of the marble about to come into play.

(Right) Cunning. Intriguing. Puzzling. Logical.



One of the early levels and - handy you're in big trouble. These four marbles resting along that top gutter are going to cause havoc, unless later!



**LOGICAL**

5  
0

THE SIMPLEST GAMES ARE OFTEN THE BEST. LOGICAL COULDN'T BE A TITLE FOR THIS, BUT IT WILL SHOW YOU TO DISCOVER WHAT YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL 99 LEVELS. AFTER THAT, THE GAME DESIGNER HAS YOUR TROUBLE PROBLEM SOLVED.

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**AMIGA**  
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**ATARI ST**  
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## THE SECRET'S OUT

Racy Pranks on Lucasfilm's *Monkey Island*™

## HERO QUEST

While He Sweeps the Board...



## ROD-LAND

While Storm Brews Up a Cliche

Just When  
You Thought  
it Was Safe  
To Go Back  
To The  
Bottom of  
Your  
Garden...

## ELF

Ocean's  
Platform  
Romp  
Raises  
its Tiny  
HeadIF Your Disk is Missing  
• Consult Your Newsagent

## LEARN TO DRIVE!

500cc of Raw Power from Gremlin  
A Complete 'Trainer' Level for Team Suzuki

Plus!

The Brain-Busting Challenge of Rainbow Arts' Logical  
And... By Popular DemandFor the First Time Ever!  
Watch the Kick ON & Goal-den Goal  
in the Comfort of Your Own Home!

06



# COMING NEXT FROM VIRGIN



The planet Earth is all in glory. It rotates, completes with day and night cycles, the surface geography is accurate and the major metropolitan areas appear in the horizon - just like real life! While it may be a dream to build, it's a nightmare to program. The surface topography is created from 518 polygons mapped onto the surface of a sphere.

You want controls? We got 'em! This is just a small fraction of the huge range of dials and buttons you'll need to master. Thank goodness for the superb help facility.



Setting the items in the bay to correctly prioritise, so that objects in the background are correctly cut off by objects in the foreground and so on, has been a real programming headache for Vektor Grafik.



Your job here, once detached from the 747, is to guide the pressurised hull to its land on the runway below. But remember, you've no engines to put you out of trouble...

# SHUTTLE

Andy Craven, boss of Vektor Grafik, is refreshingly candid about why his company are producing a game based around the Space Shuttle. "Virgin asked us to 'What they've come up a complex and highly original flight sim that models all the operations of NASA's revolutionary spacecraft - the first designed to be reusable."

It's been a huge task, but the finished product is a fine testament to Vektor's programming skills. Andy is especially proud of the sim's accuracy. So much so, that he boldly states, "I feel confident I could get in NASA's pre-flight shuttle simulator in the States and land it."

And it's not difficult to believe him. Inside the cockpit the player is presented with the bewildering sight of bank after bank of dials, buttons and levers, nearly all of which can be interacted with. Everything is realistically modelled, right down to the time it takes for the instrument screens to warm up!

The incredible level of accuracy has only been possible due to NASA's co-operation with the project. "They've been ace," enthuses Andy. As proof he points to the four lever-arch files bulging with documentation on every aspect of the Shuttle's operation, some of which has only been seen by less than 200 people around the World. "And I've had to read it all," he laughs.

In the final game the player will be presented with a series of missions based on real life scenarios, ranging from landing a powerless Shuttle launched from the back of a 747 to

**VIRGIN don sword and shield and prepare for re-entry**

# COMING NEXT FROM VIRGIN



Unit 70: Two armies prepare for war. Each side consists of a maximum of eight units, each made up of eight individual troops. That's a whopping great 128 sprites in all!

(Above): Let battle commence. Siding the wrong command unit results in a day of murder and their possible undoing. (Remember: the same could happen to you...)

# REALMS

**R**ealms is an epic wargame set in a feudal world split into feuding factions and populated by a cosmopolitan mix of exotic humanoids, orcs, elves and dwarves. Your aim is to build an empire and ultimately become ruler of the world.

This entails waging wars against your neighbours, engaging their armies and laying siege to their cities. The money to do this can

only be raised by taxation - but be too harsh and you may have a civil war on your hands. This need to juggle several balls and keep them all in the air forms the basis of Realms' gameplay.

Realms is being written by software developers Graftgold. Steve Turner, Realms' designer, admits that the game's resemblance to a certain Bullfrog product gave him concern

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# SHUTTLE

propelling satellites into orbit with the aid of the robot arm to donning space suit and going on some EVA to repair a space telescope. Each mission starts, rather unsurprisingly, with launch.

Missile control will talk you through the launch

sequence, requesting that certain buttons be pressed at certain times. If this sounds a little daunting, you'd be right. But fortunately for the bewildered novice Viktor has designed a brilliant graded help facility.

At its most helpful the program will take the player to the button needed, centre it in the middle of the screen and put a red flashing box around it. All you've got to do is click with the mouse. At its worst you're effectively left to your own devices. The intention is that the player starts with maximum help then phases it out as they become more proficient.

Shuttle looks set to be landmark sim. What could possibly follow it? Andy himself is keen to do a similar game based on the Apollo missions that put US astronauts on the Moon. "That would be great - I can remember watching the landings on TV when I was a kid," he recalls. But whether this'll materialise or not is still in the balance.

In conclusion, how would Andy sum up Shuttle? "It's very..." he pauses for thought, "...big." Indeed, it's also one of the most ambitious and exciting sims I've ever seen. Prepare for blast off on Amiga, Atari ST and IBM PC this October.

© David Upchurch



(Top) The Shuttle starts its long slow crawl from the hanger to the launch pad. You'll like this bit best of all the day... Luckily there are a whole range of time accelerators to let you speed things up



(Above) On the pad, the countdown to blast off begins. This is where you can put your flying skills (that) come in

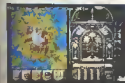


(Left) 4-3-2-1-0! With a roar the Shuttle bursts the Shuttle into the sky. An awesome sight.

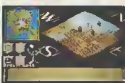
(Bottom left) Their fuel speed the Shuttle detaches from the Shuttle. If you want you can follow one these and watch as it displays its parachute to land softly on the ground. When they've got to the ground, it's definitely a case of "Wahoo! Well, well, well!"

(Bottom middle) Having escaped the Earth's atmosphere, the main fuel tank is disposed of. This will never be used again. It's burnt up when it re-enters the Earth's atmosphere due to the heat of friction.

(Bottom right) Once the mission begins in earnest, on these PCs the player has full control over the Shuttle's jet out. Whether it's the space's name is Major Tom?



Each game world is stored on disc as 121 slices of reference data on an 11 x 11 grid. At the start of the game these data points are fed into a fractal algorithm which exponentially generates the full of reference data terrain for this detailed world view and the play area. Don't think anything things?



The land is constructed from a patchwork of polygons. The shading is achieved by moving each land type (a grass, rock, scrub) as a texture strip, fading from light to dark at bottom, and "rotting" the polygon at a position along the strip depending on the landscape's slope and angle to the "sun"



Steve Turner says, "It's just, 'We're using fractals everywhere!' And that's not true! That oblique fractal algorithm makes an appearance once again in the city generation routine, where it's used to create unique yet repeatable borders."



Trapping your multifaceted armies couldn't be easier. Click on the mouse and a small icon in the bottom right of the screen (which will be made easier to see in the final version), and the relevant piece of land appears on the figure appearing to the left of the screen. Naturally, this all been hard faced for money

"When I saw the first previews of Powermonger I was worried. Although working totally independently, it looked like both Graffgold and Bulling were going up the same path.

"When Powermonger came out, we were relieved to find that the two are very different. Powermonger deals with a few individuals and details them right down to their name, job and so on. I think that sort of detail is irrelevant to a game. Reals is more about simulating a complete world of huge cities and populations. It's basically a question of scale."

It's also a question of speed. Steve notes, "I wanted to produce a strategy game with an arcade-like feel." While Powermonger's polygon-

based world could tilt, rotate and zoom, this need for the landscaping routine to be jack-of-all-trades meant that the game occasionally became very sluggish. Reals is less flexible, but the pay-off is speed. The fixed view means that the polygon plotter can be optimised, so the game updates at ten frames per second.

Most of the information vital to play is available in a visual form. Steve notes, "I wanted to get away from lists of numbers and to show any relevant information graphically. When text is necessary it's joined together in proper sentences." Thus, for example, the money in your coffers is shown as coin piles; buy stuff and you'll see your money deplete by the amount

required to do this.

But easy to control doesn't mean it's shallow. Steve has created a complex set of rules to govern the relationships between the various game elements. Leave the game alone for a while and events will start happening of their own accord - a city may start trading with another because its food stocks are low, or an army may desert due to lack of payment.

Graffgold seem to have an unerring ability to write superb software. Remember Rainbow Islands? Or Super Off Road? All classics. Reals looks set to continue the legend when it's released this September on Amiga, ST and PC.

© David Upchurch

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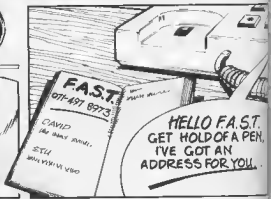
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# STORMBALL

Cross basketball with tennis and put it on rollerskates.  
What do you get? MILLENNIUM's *Stormball*!

A novel twist on the future-sports theme, *Stormball* combines the super-slick silvery graphics of *Speedball* with some basic-yet-nifty polygon routines to produce a fast-action novelty with some reasonable staying power.

The premise is acutely simple. Two players are controlled by computer (if you wish) skate around a set of increasingly complex checkboard arenas, throwing a steel ball into scoring areas. Each player has an end idea with squares of a different hue to the bulk of the pitch. When thrown by the opposing player, a ball passing over one of these hot squares will cause a scoring action.

Players can prevent the opponent from scoring simply by getting in the way of the ball. Since the ball's velocity is pretty high, most matches are high-scoring affairs with plenty of room for last second scores tipping the balance.

The players get around the course riding on little hover-pads. Which, it has to be said, are pretty mobile, although they need some getting used to.

Depending on the quality of your opponent, whether he be a linked computer-controlled drone or human, will determine the nature of play. A little like badminton or tennis, the key is to continually keep the opponent running from one side of the pitch to the other, never giving them time to compose themselves.

Flexible time limits can be set on the length of each quarter, and aside from simply making each game more or less of an endurance test, altering the time limits will completely turn around the strategy of play.

In short games, by far the best policy is to shoot the ball almost the second you are in control of it, since you have a reasonable chance of scoring and, while the ball is heading away from you, there's no danger of an opponent scoring. Longer matches require more cunning,



In two-player mode the screen splits horizontally down the middle. The game slows a little, but not really enough to ruin the fun.

and smart players will adopt a campaign-like strategy, forcing their opponents to run around after the ball.

If the ball lingers in one half for too long, the referee will call a time-out, and the game will reconvene from a ball-bounce in the centre of the arena.

So, how does the whole thing hang together? Well, it's far from perfect, the ball is a similar colour to the background and is sometimes hard to spot. Everything slows down a bit when two players are involved in furious circular spins. And you haven't got quite the control over the ball that you might.

## HITTING THE HOT SPOT

There's a whole bunch of different tiles which can be used to the benefit of practical *Stormball* players. Here's a rundown:

- **BARRIERS** - Cause the ball to bounce back. Occasionally used to form walls and gates.
- **HIGH-SCORE** - Offer varying scores ranging from 10 to 300 points.
- **MULTIPLIERS** - Multiply your current accumulated score by two. A bit like a double word square in *Scrabble*.
- **NULL SQUARES** - If the ball is to pass over these squares, your accumulated score is cancelled. Boo.
- **BREAKTHROUGH BLOCKS** - Some areas on the course are rife with bonus points which can only be accessed by knocking them through.
- **SHOOTER** - A flashing tile speeds up the ball, occasionally causing the tiles to ricochet at a particular angle.

Aside from all this, however, *Stormball* is a pretty solid game. The marrying of sprites and polygon backgrounds works a whole lot better than you would expect. Racing around after the ball, while occasionally frustrating, is actually quite exciting and the spot-effects (crowd roars, pinks & bings as scores are thrown up, etc) are excellent.

A far from an essential purchase, but a good knockabout lark none-the-less, and an ideal testing ground for the programming techniques. Roll on the sequel!

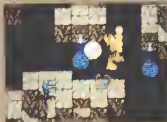
● Jim Douglas

# WARZONE

CORE DESIGN re-invent the Ikari Warriors wheel

It's 1999. Mysterions and powerful enemy forces have invaded countries around the World. You have been chosen, as the World's hardest hero, to lead an allied counter assault. But disaster strikes, and all but you and an equally tough friend are killed in a freak accident. The fate of the World lies in balance so, with the joystick firmly set to auto-fire, it's up to you two to kick the invaders' ugly butts back to oblivion.

As you wend your wicked way to a face-off with the hidden enemy base at the end of the eighth and final vertically-scrolling level, you'll find plenty



of troopers to kill, hardware to blow up, weapons and power-ups to collect and hostages to rescue for a hefty bonus (although the amorally sadistic will get more pleasure from 'accidentally' shooting them).

The terrain ranges from swamps and jungles to sewers and warships and plays a key part in the game, as in some areas you can fire from behind cover without getting hit yourself. It's worth mentioning that instead of dying each time you get hit and losing any weapons you may have collected (annoying in any game), a little energy bar begins to fade. Having taken three hits you lose the weapon or a power-up. Fortunately you can replenish your energy before this happens by collecting various med-packs scattered about in the undergrowth.

The bulk of the enemy consist of assault troopers armed with slow firing machine guns, though others are equipped with more lethal weapons such as 'rapid-firing' tripod guns and 'grenade launchers' (with which they can fire over walls without you being able to fire back).

The obligatory end-of-level means include tanks, submarines, helicopters and others from the pages of *Boy's Own Bumper Book of Armoured Vehicles*. Although they all look suitably hard, some are far too easy to kill and won't satisfy your manic lust for mindless destruction at all.

The more astute reader will have already realised that Warzone bears more than a passing similarity to the aging classic Ikari Warriors, albeit with updated visuals and a host of new touches, such as soldiers who slowly move in on you and rolling logs that have to be dodged. The

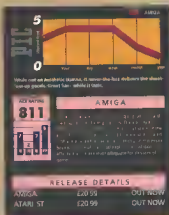


varied arsenal of weapons is the most welcome addition, making the game more fun to play.

Warzone's main strength is the ability to let another player join in which makes for the development of new tactics as one player 'covers the other's back'. Mind you, as any two-players game veteran will know, teamwork goes out of the window when it comes to collecting weapons and power-ups.

Warzone wins no prizes for originality, but as a straightforward blast 'em cure for the summertime blues it's excellent.

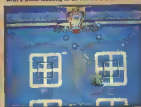
● Khalid Hossain



(Above) Everything seems to be going fine, what all of a sudden a jump spawning tactics bundles into view. Stay frosty, man, stay frosty.

(Below) The end-of-level battles are not overly exciting. One of the more tedious is this very tough attack chopper.

(Bottom) The enemy have blocked the way forward with a tank. Nothing to do but blow it to hell!





Harvard Point and Joseph Gibson - the two hardest rats in the Mercs! Feel sorry for the enemy already.

(Left) Harrier attack! You're plunged straight into the action with Harrier - you've barely started playing before you're jammed by this jet.

(Right) Mercs has quite a lot of variety contained within its basic shoot-em-up framework. Here, for example, you and your partner are stuck on a bridge slowly bricking up when not much more to be done.



All told, Mercs gives Warzone a good run for its money. Mercs is more fun for one due to its higher level of action, but Warzone has the edge for two-fisted action.

● Khalid Howlader

# MERCS

US GOLD re-invent the... etc, etc

While on a peace mission in central Africa the President of the United States has been kidnapped by Zulu rebels. Unfortunately the US can't mount a much-needed rescue mission due to diplomatic reasons, and has chosen to hire some elite mercenaries. This, of course, is where you and a tag-along mate come in. As with Warzone, this feeble plot is merely an excuse for eight levels of frenetic kill-'em action.

The biggest difference to Warzone is instantly noticeable on loading up - the play area, although narrow, scrolls horizontally as well as vertically and gives a greater feeling of movement and freedom. The action is also a lot more hectic, with soldiers piling in from all directions, each looking to get a promotion over your dead bodies.

Although largely identical in style to Warzone, Mercs does have a few features that give it a flavour all of its own. The ability to blast away huge chunks of the varied terrain is excellent - there's nothing quite more satisfying than reducing a screen-high gun turret to smoking rubble. Also great fun is the ability to commandeered idle vehicles and run over any troops foolish enough to get in your way - although these blessings boons only last a limited amount of time.

None you don't really notice the narrow play area, but with two players it's failings become all too apparent, as unless you both stick to the same area of the screen (which is contrary to usual advantages of two-players) you end up too close to the edge of the screen, giving you less time to react and not enough room to manoeuvre.



Reverend! Confronting with the boss at the end of the second and of level nearly to start in the wrap yard.

**WARZONE**

**5** (out of 5)

**805** (out of 1000)

Simple, a slightly cramped play area, limited weaponisation, no better than a shoot-'em-up. The old shoot-'em-up, Mercs is great fun for a few weeks. But the intro is Africa as you either complete it or reach a stage where you just can't get any further.

Generally changes a graphics and fast, with well designed backgrounds and simple and the shooting and so on. Simple in the end, a good game for those who like the challenge of a shoot-'em-up, and the intro of the game is a good, but the game is not a good game for those who like the challenge of a shoot-'em-up.

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LET BATTLE COMMENCE...		
	WARZONE	MERCS
No. of players	One or two Best as two players	One or two Best as one-player game
No. of levels	Eight	Eight
Weapons	Machine gun Three-way fire Rocket launcher Grenade launcher Homing missiles Flame thrower	Machine gun Three-way fire Wide shot Flame thrower
Power-up levels	Three for each weapon	Two for each weapon
Guildrons	Some far too easy to kill	Some far too hard to kill



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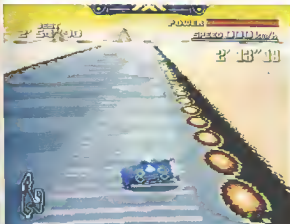
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The author's on fact that there's no slow but super get along. Instead, the player has to drive along this striped area at the edge of the track, where a giant flying saucer can swoop down and beam energy to the speeding craft.

**PIC**

5  
0

**SUPER FAMICOM**

Instant impressions for spectators are hardly white-hot. Once the curtain falls in the player's great. However, it will prove increasingly difficult to display. The craft-control learning curve is so steep, with dozens of trick moves afforded to the player and virtually infinite degrees of control available.

**840**

**SUPER FAMICOM**

There's no doubt that in any other track race, F-Zero would be a pretty mediocre racing game. However, the graphics, background scenery is made to provide a thrill and a challenge to the player. Again, Nintendo's top quality games to the fans.

**RELEASE DETAILS**

**SUPER FAMICOM** £34.99 **OUT NOW**  
Unpublished Import

# F-ZERO

**P**ol Wings was the first Famicom title to effectively use the background manipulation capabilities of the machine as an integral game element. *F-Zero* follows suit, but uses the technique in a genuinely exciting way.

Having selected your craft from a set of four, the set of tracks on which you wish to race and the skill level at which your opponents will drive, the race is on!

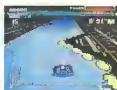
Presented with a frequently umspring start in view with the course trailing off into the distance, it's easy to find oneself wondering quite what the point of another 3D racing game is. Even with the screen update boosted and using the Famicom's processing power to the max, an against-the-clock race around a number of tracks is hardly going to set the world alight.

Indeed, even after a few races, spectators will lose interest and drift away, unable to comprehend what grips the player so completely. The appeal of the game is two-fold. The control over the craft is more precise than in any other race game. As well as the accelerator, brake, left and right controls, the two side-controllers on the Famicom's front edge act as banking switches, causing your craft to dig in its appropriate edge and hug the corners.

The degree of precision means that you can handle your craft like a cross between a hovercraft and a rally car, hanging off round corners with the tail sliding out, keeping the power on full and powersliding your way out of trouble.

And it's the speed of the craft and its amazing unpredictability which make the screen-handling so crucial. Once a turn has been initiated, the screen is automatically spun to provide an view

**Famicom owners still reeling from the Godawful Big Run can console themselves with a real racing game.**



of the track ahead. Now if you thought that was the way most race games worked, you'd be wrong. Until now, only polygon-driven games have offered a true panoramic view of the course, bitmapped graphics being unable to shift the background swiftly enough. As a result, in both sprite-driven and polygon games, the course is plotted on-the-fly, offering all but a slightly peculiar, other-worldly feel.

Since *F-Zero*'s courses are permanently on screen, you can for example see a bend right over on the far corner of the track, long before you reach it, and can set up your approach accordingly, as opposed to having to react second by second to the display plotted in front of you. It makes for a more fluid, though just as exhilarating experience.



The only drawback with the system is that everything in the background must be flat, ruling out the possibility of perspective-enhancing towers, buildings etc. However, the lack of these bonuses is more than outweighed by the speed of the system.

Depending on the skill setting opted for, the player will race against increasingly competent computer-controlled foes, who pilot the spare ships once the player has selected his favourite.

Since it's the feel of the game which makes it so good, even having read the review and studied the screenshots, it's easy to adopt a shrug shoulders attitude to *F-Zero*. Unfortunately, it genuinely is one of those games that has to be experienced.

● Jim Douglas



# BONANZA

## It's daylight robbery! SEGA blag itself a coin-op conversion

The Bonanza Bros have been doing no small trade in the arcades around the country, and while it boasts none of the technical gimmickery of recent coin-swallowers like R360 or Mad Dog McRae, its peculiar graphic style and innovative angle on the team-up theme have made a big hit with Joe Public.

So it's a far from unappealing discovery that Bonanza Bros is already available on import for the Megadrive.

The Bonanza Bros are two slaphead crooks who spend their lives comedically bringing

increasingly complex and heavily guarded buildings throughout Anytown, USA. With a reward already on the brothers' heads, the police and guards throughout the game adopt a shoot-first policy, making every turn, every doorway and every stairwell a potential location for disaster.

The point, quite clearly, is to relieve as many buildings of their valuable contents as possible, avoiding leader death along the way.

Playing with a friend if you so desire, you enter the building and plan your route to the goodies. All salient features - your whereabouts, the exit and the valuables - are marked on a schematic of the building situated in the centre of the screen. Without a doubt, it's more fun with two, since each player can head off into different areas of the game (still keeping an eye on the other's progress thanks to the split screen and coming to their aid if necessary) to collect the goodies before meeting up at the exit point.



(Above): The hold boys learn of their next mission through a private picture-show, giving an indication of what they need to collect and the nature of the terrain and the bad guys they will face.

(Above right): A second player can dive in at any time, simply by hitting start on their controller. However, there's nothing more frustrating than your 'partner' using up all your credits in order to continue their game.

(Below): One of our heroes is beset by a vicious yapping guard dog! A well-placed shot will see him off with a least respectably pitiful yelp!



(Above): These hypersimplified look buttons in good planning. During the pre-bag film show they get information on the location to be hit and the type of threat to be found inside.

Mini-wells are continue places to get stuck. The cups frequently lie in wait around them!

These annoying guards are the toughest ones to walk. Shooting at them head-on will do no good at all. Somehow you've either got to sneak past them or shoot 'em in the back!



Movers... number... move the... bottleneck... territory... will attack... shoot of... The sp... and con... combat... income... their vic...



A strong... Kap of the... actually... seems... any... about... thing... and... longer...

Each play... own game... you start... up comp...



# ZA BROS



Movement through the levels is restricted on a number of counts. Obstacles force the players to move through sections in a particular way, thus bottlenecking unwary robbers into prime ambush territory. Police, guards and odd roddic dogs will attack the robbers, forcing some entertaining shoot-out scenarios.

The speed of the bullets fired by both player and computerised opponent is such that either combatant can dodge or jump over at least one incoming shot. Skilful players will learn to lure their victims out from behind the packing cases.

filing cabinets, fruit machines and parked cars which can be used as cover, and into an oncoming bullet.

Taking a shot from an opponent, whether it be a bullet or a blow from a nightstick, is bad news. Valuable time is lost, and all the booty carried by the wounded player is dropped onto the floor. Although the player is invincible after a brief period of immobility, the action can occasionally become so frenetic, with guards surrounding the downed robber, hitting him with fresh blows the moment he has recovered, that a policy of running away may well be best. You can return at a later date to collect lost goods or, if you're making a campaign out of the game rather than attempting to get individual high-scores, leave it for your accomplice to collect while you press on.

Despite some serious slowing down when a bunch of objects are on the screen, *Boyz n' the Streets* is reminiscent of the 800-op. I steer



clear of the term 'impressive', because to be honest, this kind of kiddy-style-but-actually-rather attractive look only works effectively when you've got a fantastic graphics chip. On the Megadrive, the style simply looks a bit best.

The levels don't really pose much of a challenge until you reach double figures, and the longevity of the title is undoubtedly in question. However, for an above average blast, it's well worth a look.

■ Jim Douglas

On entering the game, you'll find the 'WANTED' sign on the wall. It's a bit of a joke, but it's there to tell you that you're a wanted man.

A strong shoulder and a bit of the B button will usually bring down a robber. If you're a bit of a slug, you might need to use the B button to bring down a robber.

Each player has their own 'score' which is displayed on the screen. If you want you can quit at any time.

A typical short-haul truck. You'll find it in the middle of the level.

Although it says 'WANTED' at the moment, normally this vehicle contains a dash man of the level, with the position of the B button and the last clearly indicated.

This indicates the number of B's each player has remaining.

The B's can jump into shelves and cupboards and even miss in and out of the scenery. It's for taking some of the tougher level weapons.

Below right: The graphic style in *Boyz n' the Streets* is peculiar, and kind of disturbing, looking even simple, but actually featuring some complex tricks.

(Right): However, even allowing for the min-op and best graphic capabilities, it's definitely an original look.

(Left): Some Megadrive owners may reach playing a title which could be easily be mistaken for a Master system title.



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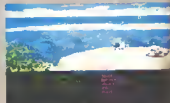
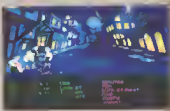
(Left) Close-up of a character in the Screen Test. Although not fully understood, his features change at critical points of the conversation and his looks tell you something about his characteristics. Does you ask him more about his destiny yet? (Above right) This scene really comes alive with the help of a delightful soundtrack, that only is there a dog in the corner (yet another nice touch of detail) But you can back along with him too. (Right) During dialogue, these characters establish relationships with each other, and impart information - a far cry from earlier adventure punters who had little to offer.

Interactive movies, aren't they just sick of 'em? They don't move, they hardly even interact, and they're for those people who used to type GO NORTH, HIT TROLL, and that sort of thing. Yeuk!

In the face of this sort of irrational bias, most software companies have stuck to the straight and narrow path of arcade, RPG, and simulation software. It's food for thought, however, when America's largest software house (Sierra) subsists almost entirely on animated graphic adventures (AGAs for short, OK?), a fact that Lucasfilm must have chewed over a few years back before spitting out their own string of AGAs, beginning with *Maniac Mansion* and *Zak McKracken*. Those games, just in case you've never heard of them, sold by the shopful.

The latest in the Lucasfilm series, *The Secret of Monkey Island*, can't be doing too badly either. Recently released for ST and Amiga, as well as in a new 256-colour VGA PC version, this game's a powerful pointer to the advances made in AGA-tech since Sierra's *Kings Quest* first perked across a CGA screen. If you're already a fan of this genre, you won't need an introduction, but if you're a stranger to the world of AGAs, what's going on?

First, these games are getting much, much bigger. In the old days, you'd struggle around maybe twenty or thirty screens, collecting objects using a very tedious type-in parser, and use the objects in the appropriate location and the required manner. Nowadays, us 16-bit owners have been painfully trained to pay more for our software, while at the same time the higher capacity disk formats now available mean that between £25 and £30 can



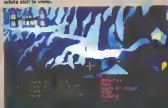
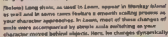
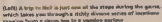
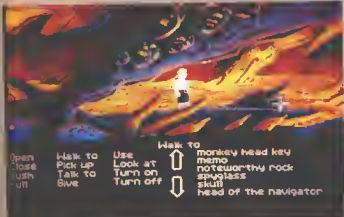
The amount of dialogue the characters offer may be limited, but the quality is far superior!

buy a whole heap of graphics and sound data. *The Secret of Monkey Island* is NOT the stuff of a morning's entertainment. Even a dedicated gamer is going to take more than a weekend to polish this one off, and most average players will be at it for many, many sessions ('average playing time', says the blurb, of '30 hours').

# THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND

LUCASFILMUS GOLD's pirate fantasy won Best Game Play at the Computer Game Developers Conference in San José. Find out why as the company release new versions and announce a sequel...





## MONKEY ISLAND II

Boy, those break stocks must be paying off. No wonder here we got the later versions of AOL, the slung across AOL, also out in the window for the PC with other 15-bit forecasts to follow.

Featuring stained art and 250-color plates, the special revolves around a revenge match between *Theropod*™ and the evil LeChuck™. Like *AOI*, it will also be designed by 3DMM programmer Ron Elbert, leading us to expect that Ron will soon be promoted to *AOI*™, if he hasn't been already. Expect some screenshots in the new game in next month's *ACE* report from Chicago CES.



Monkey Island, for example, contains several discrete sub-plots, ranging from simple quests (well, not all that simple) to do with treasure seeking and treasure stealing to a grand objective involving a dead Pirate from Hell. As Guybrush Threepwood, you're consuming ambition to become a pirate. This involves accomplishing three mini-quests during which you slowly become involved in more hazardous situations with characters both beautiful, evil, and absurd. At one point you even end up tailing a mad lord.

Perhaps appropriately, since the show revolves around money and practicality, the quest also brings you into contact with a large number of registered trade marks. Lucas's approach to have trademarked practically everything that moves, and a lot of things that don't, even the programme of *Lucas* (another Lucas trademark) to who it appears in an advertisement or even to write the game) is described as Brian Morley's™. Commercial sense, perhaps, but artistic nonsense. It certainly helps to dispel the atmosphere that the rest of the program is twice so hard to uphold.

That's a pity, because the "atmosphere" of the title are particularly potent. ADAs have become a long way in graphics and sound terms, and *Monkey Island*, along with King's *Quest V*, is currently at the head of the pack. On the *Play*, the music is excellent, as is the PC with a good sound, superb. There's a score in a piece of work that owes almost all its potency to its distinctive rhy-ming sound track, and throughout the game there are sequences set to music where superb graphics and moodily acted work very well together.

Graphics techniques have also picked up lost. Zoom introduced his so-called 'cinematic' camera, with 'long shots', 'medium shots', and 'close ups', with the 'camera angle' of the system changing appropriately during play. *Monkey Island* continues this new tradition with, for example, zoomed close-ups of people you're talking to.

and long shots of the landscape as you disappear along the road to fame and fortune. The panning, however, is still more scroll than pan – and the push scrolling system on the Amiga is a little jerky (better on the PC).

AGAs have also come a long way in terms of user interface. While Sierra have abandoned typing altogether with their point and click interface, Lucasfilm have retained an on-screen verb menu but polished up the execution. Monkey Island is extremely easy to play and, by making logical use of both left and right mousebuttons (together with single key equivalents for all commands), the programmers have removed any objections you could have to the use of an English language interface. As you move the pointer over the screen, object names drop onto the command line and a selection of two verbs is always available. The game design does the rest, so you very rarely need to access the menu (or select a specific verb for a specific object) or even, most of the time it's there, waiting for a single click to execute.

But there's more to Monkey Island than improved surface and presentation—the story structure of these games has also improved enormously, and, for my money, that's what's most exciting for us. First, although characters are still of the "I sit there looking at you and there you'll find the key!" type, their dialogue is physical, chaotic, and more in line with the plot material than a lot more interesting than their predecessors. There must be a strong reason behind this, because there's a definite sense of mismatch between characters and the player which is any pro will tell you—no what makes the difference between good and bad humor.

Which brings us back to movies. Lucifast has never (until now) attempted to brand his movies as "interactive movies" because, as his assistant told us, "we know enough about real movie making to appreciate how far away we are from it. However, these games are beginning to approach the degree of involvement and identification that has offered our audiences in their previous work." This suggests that it's now only a matter of time before the AGA really takes off. The ease with which the CD will certainly help, so will the new options because, "there's a lot of stuff in these made here, it's not just scrolling down lists, it's occasionally pretty frequent if you haven't got a hard disk) and menu selection, the playing process is still too slow there and it's worth a trip to the Caribbean for...



limbway blind guide you straightaway with a combination of gusty plus and reports around. The first five numbers are relatively easy, but as you begin to explore further what your appetite for adventure is actually selected. As with all games of this genre, some numbers need to be seen as probably to come back for more.



918



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● **Steve Conner**

**B**oardgames don't come much simpler than Spot. Starting with one counter on a seven by seven square board, players take it in turns to either 'expand' by placing another counter adjacent to one of theirs already on the board, or 'jump' a counter two squares in any direction. Any neighbouring enemy counters are then changed to the player's colour. Play continues until one player remains or the board is completely covered, in which case the player with the most counters wins.

Ho-hum, you may think, another Othello variant. And yes, you're completely correct, but Spot does have a couple of novel features that lift it above the ordinary. Two to four players can take part, with all, some or none of them controlled by computer. Apart from the basic board there are

many other more elaborate designs, featuring blank squares that pieces can't land on, adding more strategic problems to play.

More important, from the get 'emry/bums-on-seals point of view, is Spot himself. This shades-'n'-franeis wearing dude is the character used Stateside to advertise the 7-Up soft drink, and acts as the hi-NRG MC for the proceedings. The amusing and superbly animated antics of Spot and his accomplices add a whole new dimension of cutsey fun to the game.

While Spot is never going to set the gaming world alight, it's a restful antidote to serious strategy games. Having Spots before his eyes has never been so much fun.

● David Upchurch



**Break out the Biacoli!**  
**Will you find VIRGIN's**  
**boardgame catching?**

# SPOT



## MADONNA

Madonna's famous risqué has probably been photographed more times than any other malameu in history. And sitting in that prime position on the Sexxy One's top lip, just think of the stories it could tell, eh?

## CHESNEY HAWKES

Nice try, Ches, but you just don't cut it as a Madonna substitute. You can't even get your blamish in the right position! Give up now.



## SPOTTY DOG

Undoubtedly star of BBC 1's 'The Woodentop', Spotty Dog (sic) was apparently the spiciest spewy dog you ever did see. Perhaps that explains the blasé locked-jawed way he used to walk!

## ANYONE IN 'GRANGE HILL'?

Where do they get 'em from? Each of these precision stage school stars seems to have more eruptions than Krakatau. Perhaps they all eat greasy food and chocolate so that they can 'get in character.' Now that's dedication to method acting for you.

## OLIVER CROMWELL

Now it can be told! The reason Olly the Wart wanted Charles the First beheaded had nothing to do with a quest for democracy. Olly was simply jealous of Char's superior complexion. Sad men.



The four-player game on full display. Click on a number and up jump! Click, ready and wait to go. Click stopwatches, and he'll jump, gate vault, roller skate or even launch dance into position!



(Above) This editor lets you design boards: simply click on a square to fill or remove it. But the game canvas complete with a wide range of screen activity, so it's unlikely you'll need to use this facility for quite a while.

(Right) The comprehensive options allow you to tailor the players with human or computer controlled, change colored keypads, move or joystick, set time limits on moves and even turn invisible or 'Spots' animation on or off.



Easy to learn game rules and Spot's appealing animation draw you in and will keep you coming back from time to time. But let's admit that you'll never be hooked enough to find yourself going into the next small house.

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Any game which is supplied on eight disks must be pretty special; unfortunately with *Quest for Glory II: Trial By Fire*, the animated fantasy role-playing game, you get the feeling that the whole thing could have been squeezed onto two disks without much loss.

For a start, the graphics just aren't too impressive: low-res and coloured with the subtlety of a four-year-old's fingerpainting, they don't do much to draw you into the exotic world of the mysterious East. The music, too, grates, but possibly the worst aspect of the game is its sense of humour, Arabian market stallholders given Groucho Marx dialogue? A character called Stefan von Spielberg? Only the Americans could find it funny.



# TRIAL by Fire

If, though, you enjoyed the prequel, *So You Want To Be A Hero*, presumably you'll be ready for all this, and will be eager to continue the adventures of the hero you originally created. The intro routines for *Trial By Fire* allow you to select a Thief, Fighter or Wizard as your hero, allocate skill points for characteristics such as strength, intelligence, luck, honour and vitality, and enter the game, or you can load character data from the previous game.

The aim is to explore the land of Shaper and save its sister land Reser from an evil spirit. To give you some background, the package includes a game manual, guide to adventuring, and a colour map of the land of Shaper.

The game screen consists of a main graphic area with pull-down menus allowing selection of options such as game save/restore, sound on/off, animation speed, and character commands like Cast Spell, Fight, Escape, Talk and Inventory. Selecting a command brings up a dialogue box in the middle of the screen, and the mouse and numeric keypad are used to move your character, or in the combat sections to select fighting moves such as thrust, low parry or dodge left.

It's also possible to type in text commands, although the vocabulary recognised is fairly limited.

After getting stuck in the obligatory boring maze I lost interest, if you enjoy this sort of thing you may want to look out for *Quest for Glory II: Trial By Fire*, but was old man he say, steer clear of adventure games written by husband-and-wife teams called Lon and Corey.

Chris Jenkins



**Adventuring through the Arabian Nights in the sequel to *So You Want to Be A Hero***

(Top) Standard fare from Sierra. Lots of hand-drawn scenes and a lot of exploring to do.

(Left) Screen the market. Watch out for those pickpockets.

(Bottom) *Trial* is a pretty merchant. (Shopping not)

Complex overhead adventure games can be great fun, but the average system, these responses and level further of this title. Make it more games. If you enjoyed the previous, this version, but find up five up? A good introduction to this type of game.

AGE RATING: 600

AMIGA

It might be a bit more than you can handle and... (text continues)

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(Right) The Briefing Screen, impressive presentation as seen from Sierra.  
(Right, below) Sonny Munsters!

**D**ynama's Stellar 7 is an arcade epic which makes massive claims: the state-of-the-art in arcade action? A truly great game? Well, maybe if you haven't seen Starglider, or Carrier Command, or any of the several excellent solid-3D arcade games already in the arena.

But if you take the overblown claims on the packaging with a pinch of salt, you'll find that Stellar 7 is pretty impressive on sheer scale alone; supplied on three disks, it requires 1 meg to run. To avoid a lot of disk-swapping, it is worth transferring the game to hard disk if possible.

The intro screens feature suitably solemn music and some excellent graphics of non-fitted Aeturan space dictator Gir Draxon launching his spacefighters. As usual, the alien fiend has his beady eyes set on Earth, and only you, armed with the powerful Raven assault craft, can hope to penetrate his defenses and destroy him and his flagship. Pretty familiar stuff.

The range of enemy craft you have to face is wide, to say the least. Vehicles such as the Sandled, Laser Tank, Hovercraft, Prowler, Assault Tank, the invisible Stalker, Laser Battery, UFO-like Pulsar, winged Skimmer all line up to do battle. Also identified are the Warplink which you will need to find in order to transport to the next level, the FuelBay you have to find to replenish your shields, and the giant humanoid Guardian which is the last barrier between you and the Warplink. You can rotate and zoom the pictures to get a better view, before moving to the preferences menu.

Here you choose mouse or joystick control (keyboard control is always active), switch on or off the story-telling panels, and set and music or sound effects. The music is fine, but too repetitive, and you'll want to switch it off to concentrate on the heat of battle. You can also adjust a graphic detail slider; set it at maximum and the vehicles and backgrounds will be highly detailed, but there will be a significant reduction in animation speed.



**Take on space dictator Gir Draxon in what SIERRA claims to be the state-of-the-art in arcade action**

The main game display shows an out-of-cockpit view with some beautifully-detailed planetary backgrounds, and swarms of enemy ships surrounding you on your radar display. Your task is simply to destroy everything that moves, until the Guardian appears from a giant mothership, despatch him, find the Warplink and move to the next of the seven systems.

Weapon systems include shields, which falter under enemy attack; cannon which can fire two shells in each volley before a short pause to reload; super cannon with higher rate of fire; radar with a zoom option; short-term invisibility generator; "eel shield" which allows you to ram enemy vehicles; emergency thruster, jump thruster, mines, cloak detector and so on. Some of these features can only be gained by destroying enemy craft and collecting their power modules.

There's some good sampled speech, particularly chilling when you get blown up and Gir Draxon announces "Earth is mine! Everything is mine! Now to punish the Earthlings for their foolish resistance!"

Stellar 7 may be little more than a Starglider derivative, but it's well put together and warrants your own inspection.

© Chris Jenkins

(Below) The 3D graphics are certainly anything but the fastest in the world, but they're still marvellous.



STELLAR 7

**5** **AMIGA**

**780**

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OWNER!



# TNT

## Tricks 'n' Tactics

A huge playing guide to Supercars 2, mini-cheats for Chuck Rock and ESWAT, PC tips by the bucket-full, a bumper console corner PLUS the chance for fame and fortune as we begin the search for our official ACE Tricks 'n' Tactics compiler!

## Supercars 2

**N**o sooner is the game on the shelves than it's in TNT. Are we quick or what? Hoards of would-be boy racers have flocked to the need for speed, so it's with great pleasure that we present these playing tips straight from the horse's - or should that be Gremlin's - mouth...

### COURSE FEATURES

**JUMPS** - Take off as straight as possible to make sure of clearing the gap but occasionally when on a corner, for example - a slight angle of attack can stop you from hitting the wall on the other side. If you're stuck in a jam you'd do better to wait and take a run-up after the cars have passed.

### CROSS OVERTS

- Sorry! You are not allowed to cheat - you'll be docked a whole lap - so time them right going in and coming out. If you are knocked off course you must go back, even if it means taking all the other cars pass.

### OPENING GATES

- Sometimes it's worth halting and waiting for them to open, but since they all open and close regularly you can usually anticipate the right time to make your move. Remember that you can still squeeze through a closing gate.

### TUNNELS

- If you get stuck inside, keep turning until the screen starts to scroll the right way. Super missiles are useful here.



### IN THE SHOP

Right, here's a little inside information. The weapons/power-ups have a maximum price, and each visit the prices are randomly set somewhere between that and 1/4 maximum. Trade-in prices are 3/4 of the sale price, so with a little insider knowledge you can make quite a killing...

### IN THE GARAGE

This is fairly simple once you know the secret. Each repair has a maximum price, and the nearer the quoted cost is to that price the more good it will do. If a quote is almost maximum, then that repair will often do most of the whole job. The maximum prices are:

### WEAPON/POWER-UP

### BUY

### SELL

### NOTES

Front missiles	100 - 400	75 - 300	
Rear missiles	150 - 600	110 - 450	
Homing missiles	375 - 1500	280 - 1125	
Super missiles	250 - 1000	185 - 750	
Mines	200 - 800	150 - 600	
Turbo jump	125 - 500	90 - 375	
Ram	250 - 1000	185 - 750	
Engna	1250 - 5000	935 - 3750	

Only really useful in exceptional circumstances. Best used to 'play the market' by snapping 'em up cheap and selling them later at a profit so you can buy the bigger weapons.

Same as the front missiles. Universally useful, especially on the road sections where they can be used to clear a path and on last courses where you can't catch the other cars.

Best used in tunnels where you can't see the other cars and on gated courses where there's the possibility you might suddenly meet cars coming the opposite way.

Great for keeping other cars off your tail - and especially good fun in two-player mode!

Use to 'jump the queue' when coming off the starting grid. Otherwise only use them when standing still or when you've got to jump a train - you'll need about three cars length run-up to clear if it's pay through the nose for it. Get all three grades on hard level.

Okay, but you'll incur a lot of damage if you use this method to get past opposing cars!

The higher top speeds are vital on the higher levels, but be sure to pick 'em up cheap as they can be real dosh eaters.

### REPAIRS

Spark  
Exhaust  
Gear  
Brake  
Pump  
Tyres  
Steering  
Suspension

This is much more of a decrease in cheap, exceeding damage.

### COMMENTS

These are the points of the game, and the ones that are most important.

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## REPAIR

## MAX. COST

Spark plugs	£400
Exhaust	£800
Gear box	£600
Brakes	£400
Panel/body	£1000
Tyres	£600
Steering	£800
Suspension	£1000

Thus buying Spark Plug repairs at £390 will do much more good than Bodywork at £520.

It often pays to just do those repairs that will decrease your damage by a fair bit and are fairly cheap. It's hardly ever worth repairing everything, except on some of the higher levels where the damage incurred is proportionally higher.

## COMMUNICATIONS SCREENS

These can be turned off, but once you know the answers they can provide an extra cash and points boost every game!

Generally, on the Dept of Transport screen the answers are the straight forward correct ones, and on the other screens it pays to be self confident - but not cheeky!

There are exceptions, however. Basically the formula goes like this:

- One answer is always 'Right'.
- One answer is always 'Wrong'.
- The remaining answer has a random equal chance of being 'Right' or 'Wrong'. So you may think you know the answer and next time it will be wrong - or vice versa.

## GENERAL POINTS

### HARDBRAKE TURNS

Useful on tight corners. Just take your foot/finger off the accelerator and turn the car. When you're about half way towards your desired direction, re-apply the accelerator. It can help a lot - honest.

### OVERTAKING

There are two main methods - well, three if you count missiles!

- Simply passing cars on the straight. (This is known as 'stating the bleeding obvious'.)
- Knocking out cars on corners. Just take the inside line and crash into the offending vehicle. They'll take a little while to get their bearings, by which time you'll be long gone.

Don't take undue risks - it's just not worth it if you crash into a car, you will both end up slowing down, so if you can't get past, it's probably best to bide your time and wait for a better chance.

## THE EASY TRACKS

1. No problems here - well, there shouldn't be. Save your missiles and avoid collisions.
2. Try to master the turn at the corner labelled 'X' to save valuable time. Make sure you're clear of trouble at the jump.
3. Again, avoid collisions and try to nudge cars



cut on corners to get past. Homing missiles are useful here.

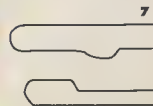
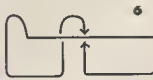
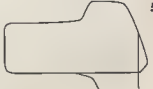
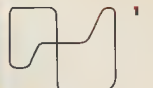
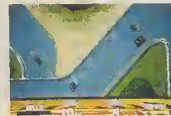
4. This track features lots of tunnels. Remember the earlier tip - if you get stuck in one rotate the car until the scroll kicks in. Super missiles are very handy. Beware - some of the enemy cars are armed with mines!

5. This track offers the driver a choice of routes. 'A' is usually the best unless circumstance forces you otherwise, i.e. a missile bearing down on you.

6. Lots of tight corners, but the real problem is the jump. Make sure you're clear of the other cars and approach the ramp at full speed in the centre of the road. Turn at the right time and you should take off straight. Easyish.

7. As with Track 3, homing missiles are useful. Save time by going through the shortcuts but be careful not to get squashed. Spend all remaining cash.

Next month look out for maps and guides to the Medium and Hard tracks!



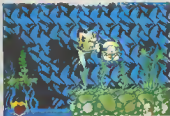
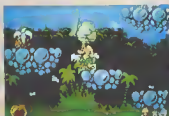


## Chuck Rock

Much like policemen seem to be getting younger and younger, the hackers seem to be getting quicker and quicker. Alex 'Les' Rankin and Malcolm 'Gadget' McIlwain provide these codes which, once typed in on the title screen, give of Chuck a whole range of super-cave-man powers...

ESTRANO  
MORTIMER  
TURN FRAME  
FAST AINT THE WORD  
UNCLE SAM'S  
LIFE IS MY DREAM  
SHE LOVES CLEANING WINDOWS  
ITS FARY BOWBELZ

- Pressing left SHIFT makes Chuck fly.
- Press F1 to F5 to select zone.
- Press number keys to select level.
- Infinite energy.
- Infinite energy.
- Infinite energy.
- Infinite energy.
- Infinite energy.



## Turrican II

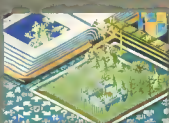
It's a pleasant surprise when a sequel turns out to be even better than the original, and this superb shoot-'em-up is one of those wonderful treats. For infinite lives on the Amiga incarnation simply enter the music menu and select the first option. Select it again and then press numbers 4 and 2. Tap the ESCAPE key twice to get into game and off you go.

## Console Corner

MEGADRIVE

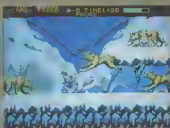
### Cyberball

THIS CONVERSION OF THE Tengen on-disk isn't half bad, but it's a patch on John Madden's Football. Still, here's a tip to get you straight into the Superbowl game which, if you win, will let you watch the end-of-game sequence. Simply enter this code: 658B BXII BFEY. Play ball!



### Populous

THIS IS A TRUE software classic. But if you're finding the going a bit tough and fancy trying out some of the later worlds why not try this neat bit. Select a new level, and when asked for the password keep the B button pressed down and you'll be able to enter numbers as opposed to letters. Experiment with a variety of codes to see where you end up! Your fate is in the lap of the Gods!



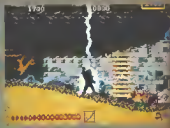
### Strider

NOT ONLY IS THIS one of the best coin-op conversions we've ever seen, it is also very, very, very tough! If you fancy the ability of being able to continually restart the game with full energy at the point you died, follow these guides: at the start of the game when the Master is laughing, push 'Down' on the joystick and then tap buttons A, C, B, C, A. Stroll on!

### Ghouls 'N' Ghosts

CAN SEGA DO NO WRONG with their coin-op conversions? Like Sinder, this is high on faultlessness, except for its difficulty setting. Never mind, here's a cheat to let you jump levels. On the title screen, push the joystick Up, Down, Left and Right, you should hear a bell to check you've done it correctly. Now hold down the joystick as follows and press START.

- |      |              |
|------|--------------|
| 2    | Up           |
| 2    | Down         |
| 4    | Left         |
| 5    | Right        |
| Loku | Down & right |



GAMEBOY

### Burai Fighter

THIS GREAT midway scrolling shoot-'em-up was reviewed last issue. Fancy the access codes to all five ACE levels? Of course you do. Here goes:  
1 Just tap fire!  
2 GBHC  
3 MHCB  
4 CDMN  
5 KDPG

Finishing the fifth level reveals a totally new difficulty setting, ULTIMATE. But we'll leave you to battle your way through these strange new worlds.

### Nemesis

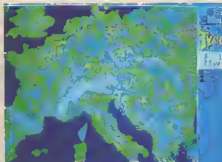
STRANGELY ENOUGH, this is arguably the best conversion of this ageing coin-op blaster. If you want all the mega-weapons booted on right from the word go, simply push Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, B, A, B, and there you have it!

## Railroad Tycoon

Jeito Bouma strikes again! But be warned that this cheat to generate more starting cash requires a little jiggery-pokery with the PC-TOOLS utility. Here goes:

- Select any saved file (i.e. RR0.SVE through RR4.SVE).
- Search for the 'E803' hexadecimal string. To do this in PC-TOOLS: press 'F', press F1, type 'E803' and then press ENTER.
- Replace 'E803' with 'FF7F'.
- Save the file, exit PC-TOOLS and when you boot up the saved game you should have more than 30 million dollars in cash!

Note that the best thing to do is buy all your treasury stock (minus 10,000), since it becomes extremely valuable, then sell all your bonds and start building. When another railroad starts, buy it!



## ESWAT

This less-than-wonderful coin-op conversion to the Amiga and Atari ST is just another on Les and Gadget's list of cracked games. For 99 credits just type in 'JUSTIFIED ANCIENTS OF MU MU' when the game's paused.



## F19 Stealth Fighter

Yet another routine to type into your PC. This time around you can - as if by magic - bring any terminally downed pilots back from the afterlife by running this routine:

```
10 OPEN "R", 1, "ROSTER.FIL"
20 FIELD 1, 1 AS NR15, 79 AS NR25
30 FOR I=1 TO 10
40 LSET NR15=CHR$(0)
50 PUT 1, I
60 NEXT I
70 CLOSE 1
80 END
```

Note that your ROSTER.FIL will swell somewhat, but rest assured that this doesn't harm the game. Thanks to Jeito Bouma of Abcoude, Holland, for this.



## Prince of Persia

Here's a particularly neat - and very useful - PC tip for this super-ly animated sword 'n' urban action adventure from Broderbund/Domark. When in DOS, type PRINCE.MEGAHIT to load the game. Then, simply pressing the letter 'K' on the keyboard will instantly make any guards encountered collapse down dead.

## WANTED!

### BRITAIN'S TOP TIPSTER

ACE is looking for a very special person. The sort of person who had Turrican II beat within a week of release. The sort of person who's found every level of Super Mario World. The sort of person who finds level 9-5 of Gameboy Tetris as easy as felling off a log. The sort of person who wants to pass on that valuable knowledge to others. In other words, the perfect person to write and edit ACE's 'Tricks 'n' Tactics'!

The tipster we're looking for will want the challenge of making TNT the World's best tips section. You'll be required to write definitive playing guides and complete solutions, and compile extensive lists of cheats, hints and hacks, and ideally you should own - or at least have access to - all of the machines ACE covers (though we realise that's a pretty tall order!)

In return we offer the chance to see your name in print and rewards beyond the dreams of avarice! So apply now on the coupon below, enclosing a sample of your writing style (a brief playing guide or selection of tips, for example - 400 words should be enough) and any other information you feel relevant.

We know you're out there! Come on in! SEND TO: TNT EDITOR JOB, ACE, PRIORITY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGTON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

... .. POST CODE:  
AGE: ... ..

I own the following machines:

- ☐ AMIGA
- ☐ ATARI ST
- ☐ IBM PC
- ☐ SEGA MEGADRIVE
- ☐ NINTENDO SUPER FAMICOM
- ☐ ATARI LYNX
- ☐ SEGA GAMEGEAR
- ☐ NINTENDO GAMEBOY

I have access the following machines:

- ☐ AMIGA
- ☐ ATARI ST
- ☐ IBM PC
- ☐ SEGA MEGADRIVE
- ☐ NINTENDO SUPER FAMICOM
- ☐ ATARI LYNX
- ☐ SEGA GAMEGEAR
- ☐ NINTENDO GAMEBOY

★ Don't forget to enclose the work samples ★

wailing sirens

"sir" storm

# NEXT TIME ROUND...

clubs, yellow

cheques, train

man's salad

robert do niro

It's not usual for us to devote hard-fought-for magazine space to a preview of our own next issue, but we felt obliged to let you in on our plans.

In case you hadn't guessed, certain members of the Editorial team are heading off to the States next month to report from the 1991 Summer Consumer Electronics Show in Chicago. Quite apart from the work, work, work, ethic of the event, we'll be having a ball talking to people like Dynamix, Sierra, Mindscape, EA, Nintendo, Sega, NEC, Atari, Origin, Commodore and Lucasfilm Games and we've devoted 50 pages of the August issue to give you all the information we can get.

The information we'll bring you covers all aspects of gaming, from the hot new title of next week, to the new coin-op and multi-player network systems of the future.

And, of course, an Exclusive round-up of all the News of the show before any other mag gets near it.

But our Stateside frenzy doesn't mean we'll be taking our eye off the ball here in Britain. No way. There will be a new and improved Tricks'n'Tactics department, a revamped previews section, a brand new section covering hot games' development and, of course, all the major software releases of the month reviewed in detail by our expert team of software examiners.

So, if you're unkeen on the idea of missing out on a detailed breakdown of every single important event to occur at the US Show, or the idea of missing out on the finest software reviews, you'd be wise to assure your own copy of the issue. And my, what a coincidence...

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● **EXCLUSIVE** interviews with the very top people from the very top companies.

● **EXCLUSIVE** details from Stateside programming gurus like Sid "Railroad Tycoon" Meyer on their new projects.

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● **EXCLUSIVE** reviews of the latest American software for your machine.

● **EXCLUSIVE** information on the future of computer games - you will be amazed!



Oh, Mr Newsagent,

I long to possess the August issue of ACE magazine, on sale July 19th. I know it will be stuffed with features, reviews and news, and realise I would be foolish to miss out. So, please

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JULY '91 ISSUE 116

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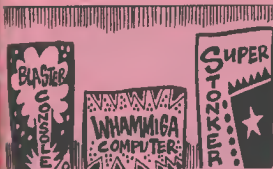
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Can't decide which best to pick up at the shops? Turn between an Amiga, an ST, an Archimedes, and a giant Panda? Check out the ACE Hardware guide on pages 194 for enlightenment.

# CONTENTS

## 92 ACE Charts

A new look for the industry's most authoritative, controversial charts – from now on we'll be printing both the ACE and Gekup charts side by side – so you can see not only which games have got the top review marks in ALL UK magazines, but also which games are getting the biggest sales. All that AND the chance to win a prize by predicting next month's results. Yay!

## 96 Hardware Buyer's Guide

Our definitive tech listings and buyer's guide. This month: 16-bit computers... Check out the power, the programs, and the potential of each machine.

## 117 The ACE Prize Crossword

Can you read faces? (4) And will you win a prize by cracking this tough computer game wordplay puzzle?

## 101 Bookwatch

Fancy a quiet corner, a comfy chair, and a good book? Sandra Vogel highlights a batch of titles that might appeal to the weary gamer...

## 103 Direct Line

Let's get intimate, stranger. Let's talk about YOUR machine. Amiga, PC, ST, Megadrive, Game Boy and Lynx owners get the latest instalment of the ACE machine-specific chat column.

## 111 Hot off the Shelf

Our definitive listing of games that have received top ratings in ACE over the last few months and which should still be available on the shelves.

## 119 Public Domain

Pet Whelan takes over Mark Smiddy's regular monthly PD slot and pinpoints some of the latest bargain basement games software to be found in the public domain...

## 121 The ACE Diary

Our monthly guide to what's on where and what's out when

## 118 ACE Readers Pages

Your chance to contact thousands of readers around the world.

## 122 The Blitter End

The world's most expensive phonebook? And how to win at chess.

# in the



ACE has brought you over 10 issues, all packed with info on games technology if you're missing any back issues – such as this one, which gave you exclusive coverage of the first PC based VR system. Don't telephone 0855 679516 for availability and order details

# ACE CHARTS

Here they are – the new look, new data ACE charts, now better than ever. Our charts have always been the most useful for readers, because they're based on the actual review marks that games get and not on sales figures. That way, you can actually see which games you SHOULD be buying – not just which games everyone else is getting. The ACE charts help you follow the stars, not the crowd!

Each month, we collect all the available UK games magazines and check out the review marks for every game. Then we simply work out the average mark that ever game receives – the figure in the right hand column (out of 100). The higher mark, the better the reviews. AND you can win a prize every month – see the opposite page.

IBM PC	
Sim Earth	Ocean
Space Quest IV	Sierra
Eye of the Beholder	SSI/US Gold
King's Quest V	Sierra
Life and Death 2	Mindscape

Sim Earth takes the top slot and is doing well in the sales charts too. Otherwise it's business as usual for the PC specialists.



The ACE Charts are DIFFERENT! They rate games not according to sales, but according to the review marks they got in ALL British games mags...

AMIGA	
Swiv	Storm
F-15 Strike Eagle 2	Microprose
Gods	Blimp Brothers
Armour-Geddon	Psygnosis
PGA Tour Golf	Electronic Arts

Only two scores over 80%. As you can see from the Gallup charts below, both Armour Geddon and PGA are selling well.

ATARI ST	
Lemmings	Psygnosis
Secret of Monkey Island	US Gold
Gods	Blimp Brothers
Int'l Karate Plus	Hit Squad
Metal Mutant	Falco

Gods is overtaken by Lemmings and Monkey Island. Neither Monkey Island nor Gods are in the sales charts yet, however.

# GALLUP CHARTS

The Gallup charts are new to ACE, but we'll be featuring them every month from now on. Unlike our own ACE charts, they're based exclusively on SALES. So if a game hits the high spots here, it's because numerous punters are beating a path to the shops to get hold of it.

What's interesting is that now you can compare the sales of a top game with the review marks it's been getting. However, you should remember that reviews often come out before a game is actually in the shops, so you may have to wait a while until you see the title appearing in the sales charts. You'll notice some pretty odd prices in the charts at the moment, thanks (or no thanks) to the 17.5% VAT rate.

IBM PC		
COLOSSUS CHESS X	CDS	£24.99
SIM EARTH	OCEAN	£34.99
ELECTROCOP	US GOLD	£29.97
KICK OFF 2	ANCO	£29.99
BATTLE OF BRITAIN	US GOLD	£29.99



...and here's how they sold!  
ACE will be publishing sales charts AND reviews charts every month from now on...

AMIGA		
ARMOUR-GEDDON	PSYGNOSIS	£25.99
GODS	RENEGADE	£25.53
CHUCK ROCK	CORE DESIGN	£25.54
PGA TOUR GOLF	ELECTRONIC ARTS	£25.99
LEMMINGS	PSYGNOSIS	£24.97

ATARI ST		
LEMMINGS	PSYGNOSIS	£25.55
FINAL WHISTLE	ANCO	£12.99
KILLING CLOUD	MIRRORSOFT	£29.97
HERO QUEST	GREMLIN	£25.99
CHUCK ROCK	CORE DESIGN	£25.54



## THE STOCKMARKET

In addition to our games charts, we also have a bit of fun with the figures each month when we produce the ACE Stockmarket. This is the list of the companies whose games are getting the highest review marks at the moment. Any software house that gets to the top of this Roll Of Honour has a right to crack open a bottle of champagne...

Each month, we calculate the average mark that each publisher received for every one of its games on each format. This is the rating that you see in the SCORE column. This month, the figure includes 8-bit games, but from next month it will be 16-bit ONLY! At present, however, 8-bit games are taken into account. So, for example, if the company is great at scoring 16-bit games but lousy up to 8-bit conversions, that will pull down the average mark, even if you can see one of its titles headup the Amiga, ST or PC charts; opposite. If all the games are excellent, or if the company has just one brilliant program doing the rounds at the moment, it will consequently have a high rating.

Although we print only the top 25 companies each month, we keep tabs on all of them. Occasionally a new company will enter the listings, in which case the names will be highlighted with an asterisk.

Finally, we don't count companies which have only received a single solitary review, so that all the figures below are the result of several reviews by several magazines, each with different opinions...

PUBLISHER	SCORE	GREMLIN	80.74
Digital Int'l	93.17	Palladia	80.6
System 3	92.5	Sierra	80.42
Storm	91.5	UbiSoft	80.25
Microprosa	89.59	16 Blitz	80.11
Bitmap Brothers	89.21	Mirror Image	79.64
AudioLogic	87.75	Code Masters	78.94
Infocom/Mastertronic	87.5	Hewson	78.5
Paygnosis	84.86	Electronic Arts	77.88
Ocean	84.44	Krisalis	77.67
Hi-Tac	84	Playmation	77.25
Core Design	83.86	SSI/US Gold	77.06
Mastertronic	81	US Gold	76.87

### How HOT were last month's games?

You can find out just how good last month's games were by checking the figures below. Called the Software Index, it's simply the average mark that ALL games got in previous last month. Last month's games weren't quite so good as April's.

Software Index: 74.95

## WIN A PRIZE!

If you can predict the entries in next month's ACE charts (NOT in the Galaxy charts), you can win a free game for your machine. Here's how:

### STEP ONE

Find a postcard, or write your entry on the back of an envelope. Enter your name and address, a daytime telephone number if you have one, the machine you own, your age, and the Round Number (in the box below).

### STEP TWO

Examine this month's charts. Then, using your knowledge of the games scene, try to predict which games will come top of the ACE charts next month. Finally, enter on your postcard:

- the top game for the IBM PC
- the top game for the Amiga
- the top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A SUGGESTION FOR EVERY MACHINE! But remember that your chances of winning may increase if you do.

### STEP THREE

You can try to predict which company will be at the top of next month's Stockmarket listing (in this page). Enter on the card: The top software will be... (name of company)

### STEP FOUR

Post the card WITH a stamp to us

to arrive not later than the closing date for this round (24th June). The address is:

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### THE RULES

• All entries must be received on or before 24th June 1991.

• No employees of NAC or of any company involved in the publication, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.

• Only one entry per household. Proof of posting not held as proof of delivery.

• We cannot undertake to deliver specific software titles as prizes, but rest assured that we will spare every effort to ensure that the games get to the subscriber concerned.

### THIS IS ROUND 20

NB Due to space limitations last month's winners will be announced in the next issue.

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# HARD SELL

and Sell is going through rather a traumatic time at the moment. It's in the process of evolving into a bigger, more comprehensive guide to both computer and console specifications. During this, if you will, sorry adolescence the less popular machines have had to be left out for the moment. In compensation, the Gamegear makes its debut. A big round of applause, please

## COMPUTERS

### ATARI STE

**Models:** Atari 520STE, 1040STE, Mega STs

**Package:** 520 and 1040 have key board with built-in disk drive, Mega versions have separate keyboard. Keep eyes peeled for current software bundles

**Memory:** 520STE 512K; 1040STE 1MB, Mega ST 1, 2 or 4MB. All machines can be expanded internally to 4MB

**Processor:** 8MHz Motorola 58000

**Recommended Retail Price:**

520STE £399, 1040STE £499

**Contact:** Atari PB (0753) 33344

#### IN BRIEF

Hard days for the machine that arguably started the avalanche to 16 bit computers. The STE boasts capabilities almost on par with its arch-rival the Amiga, but the Commodore machine seems to be the one most people want these days. As it happens, because this is still a great general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity, and thanks to its MIDI port it still the number one choice for MIDI musicians

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** Low-res 320 x 200, medium res 640 x 200, high-res 640 x 400

**Palette:** 4096

**Colours:** Black and white in high-res, 4 colours in medium-res, 16 in low-res

**TV:** Yes

**Monitor Output:** IIGL

**Monitor Supplied:** No

**Monitor Optional:** Atari monitors SM124 high-res mono, SC1442 mid-res colour

**Sprites:** No

**Speed:** Fast  
**HB High resolution display** is only available on monochrome monitor; medium and low res displays only available on colour monitors or TVs.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on monitor

**MIDI:** Yes

**Stereo Output:** Yes

**Performance:** Three 8-bit PCM stereo sound channels.

#### HARDWARE

**Disk Format:** 3.5 inch - 720K

**Disk Price:** Around £1 50

**Disk Performance:** Fast, reliable.

**Keyboard:** 96 keys including 10 function keys. Has a cheap feel which can be improved with third party spring kits.

**Joystick/Mouse:** Two joystick ports as standard, two-button mouse is supplied with machine.

#### SOFTWARE

**Existing Software Base:** Excellent. The budget market provides a relatively cheap way of building up an impressive collection of software classics

**Current Releases:** None of the major software houses ignore the ST so it is well served with plenty of good software.

**Games:** Across the board

**Graphics:** Good with some excellent software to manipulate them  
**Music:** Excellent. Plenty of sound samplers, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice

**Prospects:** Very good, but the Amiga is currently the favourite with software houses in the UK and the chances of a sudden boom of interest in the ST Statewide look very slim.

**Software Loading:** No problems at all. The STE's drive is fast and friendly to the ease. It warned that some companies still release games on two or more single-sided discs (a hang on from the old days when the ST had single-sided drives) which can mean unnecessary and annoying bouts of disc swapping.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** As BPP

**Second Hand Availability:** Very common and quite cheap. Bazaar is very old, single used ST machines

**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee. Return to dealer if faulty

### COMMODORE AMIGA

**Models:** Amiga 500, A500, A2000, A3000

**Package:** A500 has keyboard and

built-in drive with separate PSU. A1500 and A2000 have separate keyboard with built-in (fan assisted) PSU. A3000 is a very powerful machine indeed

**Memory:** A500 512K, A1500 & A2000 1MB; A3000 2MB.

**Processor:** 500/500/2000

Motorola 68000, A3000 68030, 16 or 25MHz

**Recommended Retail Price:** A500 (NA): Screen Gems £399.99, Flight of Fantasy Pack £399.99, Class Of The 90s pack £379.99 (all packs inc A500), A1500 from £999; A2000 from £1199 (for 1MB+20MB hard disk); A3000 from £3160 (for 2MB+40MB hard disk) (All prices inc VAT).

**Contact:** Commodore (0628) 770088

#### IN BRIEF

A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the first choice for the most exigent of games players and video professionals. After an initially shaky start the machine continues to sell extremely well and has overtaken the ST in the UK. Though the latter machine still has a slightly larger installed base the A1500 is near-identical spec-wise to the A2000, but cheaper. The A3000 is a top-end workstation substitute; includes Workbench 2, featuring enhanced icons, file handling, and security features plus Amiga Vision, a multi-media programming tool. A3000 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 16MHz/40MB hard disk to a 25MHz/100MB disc.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** From 320 x 200 to 640 x 400 (more possible in software)

**Palette:** 4096

**Colours:** 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 4096

**TV:** With modulator.

**Monitor Output:** SCART + composite video in monochrome

**Monitor Supplied:** No

**Monitor Options:** C1064 £349.99

**Sprites:** 16 in hardware & unlimited 8095 from software

**Speed:** Very fast with good software

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on monitor

**MIDI:** No. Third party interfaces available

**Stereo Output:** 2 phono connectors.

**Performance:** Among the best around. Custom hardware squeezes 9 octaves of 8-bit digital sound into the four channels.

#### HARDWARE

**Disk Format:** 3.5 inch - 837K, A3000 40/100Kbyte hard disk formatted.

**Disk Price:** Around £1 50

**Disk Performance:** Nifty and sluggish. Third party software is available to improve matters

**Keyboard:** 94 keys 10 function keys and separate cursor cluster  
**Joystick/Mouse:** Two-button mouse supplied as standard,

**Interfaces:** Two Joystick/mouse, stereo audio, external disk drive(s), RS232 serial; Centronics parallel printer; SCART RGB/Video, composite monochrome video, expansion bus (Internal on A1500 & A2000; 32-bit on A3000); clock/memory expansion on A500 only; Internal PC expansion on A1500, A2000 and A3000

#### SOFTWARE

**Existing Software Base:** Similar to the ST

**Current Releases:** Everyone's doing them

**Games:** Something for everyone

**Graphics:** Quality and range is unsurpassed

**Music:** Needs better support for MIDI. Internal sound software is well supported thanks to IFF standards

**Prospects:** Excellent

**Software Loading:** Nifty but usually reliable. Plagued by viruses.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** Old Amiga 1000s can be picked up cheaply enough but these lack the extra graphics modes of later models. Try to find a good value pack

**Second Hand Availability:**

Becoming common. Best buys are

late Amiga 500s with Kickstart 1.2

**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee. Return faulty machines to dealer.

### IBM PC

**Models:** IBM's PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities (not the first PC) and remains the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from Amstrad, Atari and Commodore. In general, with PCs you pay for speed and better graphics standards. The axiom: money is worth it if you can afford it.

**Package:** Depends on the manufacturer although most a supplied with monitors. They can even be bought in kit form at an extra saving

**Memory:** Usually 512K or 640K. Can be anything from 64K to 1MB+

Always go for a 640K model

**Processor:** Intel 8088/8086 in base machine. Is sometimes replaced with the faster NEC V20/30. More expensive machines are based on Intel's much faster 286, 386/5, 386 and even the latest 486

**Recommended Retail Price:** Can be picked up for as little as £299 for a "no frills" machine. With top-of-the-range 486 based clones - and the official IBM versions - the sky's the limit. Look for a good EISA or VGA model for between £750 and £1000

#### IN BRIEF

Superb value if you want the ultimate all rounder, the PC still betrays its business origins. Almost every major software house now port their titles to the PC but these remain limited by the constraints of the basic

(most common) machines – which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics. Definitely NOT first choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, or if you cannot afford the better EGA or VGA models (which are really essential for good games playing)

#### GRAPHICS

The first PCs weren't fitted with graphics as standard but most clones incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are three main standards: CGA – a nasty but all too common colour display; EGA about the lowest colour display worth considering; VGA – an Amiga/ST beating display, and Hercules monochrome. EGA or VGA which are usually only fitted as standard to more expensive machines (Amstrad's PC2086 is one exception).

**Resolution:** CGA 320 x 200; EGA 640 x 350; Hercules 720 x 384; VGA 800 x 600

**Palette:** CGA 8 (in two fixed sets), EGA 64, VGA 256

**Colours:** CGA 4, EGA 16, VGA 64, Hercules 2

**Monitor Output:** TTL RGB/RGBW (CGA), analogue RGB (VGA)

**Monitor Options:** Vast. Many monitors are dedicated to just one or two modes – some have amber, green or white monochrome displays – check before buying

**Sprites:** None

**Speed:** Very slow – 8088 to very fast – 80486

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Built-in sound is very poor. Third-party add-on sound boards such as Roland (ES30) and AdLib (ES10) – which is fast becoming a standard – provide synthesiser-quality sound through an amplifier.

**MIDI:** Third party interfaces available

**Stereo Output:** With boards, yes.

**Performance:** Not the ideal machine for the musically bent – an Atari ST offers more for MIDI, the Amiga more for software sound purists.

#### HARDWARE

**Disk Format:** 5.25in – 100/90K/1.2Mb; 3.5in 720K/1.44Mb

**Disk Price:** 60p – £3.00

#### Disk Performance:

Average. Most PC owners also buy hard disks. A large amount of PC applications software refuses to work unless you have a hard disk.

**Keyboard:** Almost as many variations as there are clones. Prefer the AT or extended AT layouts to the XT layout since it's easier to use.

**Joystick/Mouse:** Neither supplied as standard. The better clones include a mouse or at least a mouse port, especially since IBM's WIMP system (Windows) has become more popular.

#### SOFTWARE

**Existing Software Base:** Vast. **Current Releases:** All major software houses now produce something for the PC, with many now supporting the superior iVGA modes.

**Games:** Most of the best Amiga/ST titles appear on the PC eventually. **Graphics:** Given the right graphics adaptor, the PC has nice graphics and the software is usually excellent. On a standard CGA PC the graphics stink no matter how good the software is.

**Music:** Unexpanded it's pathetic. However, add-on boards offer some of the best sound you'll hear on a home computer.

**Prospects:** The PC is the eternal champion – as others fall by the wayside it carries on getting faster and better all the time. This is aided by Intel constantly improving the machine's processor and the vast user base demanding better equipment.

**Software Loading:** Fast and reliable, very fast from hard disk.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** Watch out for package deals from large chains and mail order companies. If you don't know too much about PCs go for a name you know.

**Second Hand Availability:** Common but be careful you do not get a clapped out monitor/key-board.

**Maintenance:** Usually one year's guarantee – but competition has forced the price of maintenance contracts down to an affordable level. This often means they fix in-situ free.

#### Monitor Output:

No. **Monitor Supplied:** Yes – 3.5" beek lit colour LCD

**Monitor Options:** None. **Sprites:** Special graphics hardware effectively treats ALL screen objects as sprites.

**Speed:** Fast

**SOUND**

**Speaker Quality:** Very good

**MIDI:** No

**Stereo Output:** Yes

**Performance:** Four-channel, five octave stereo sound has to be heard to be believed

#### HARDWARE

**Joystick:** Eight-way joystick

**Ports:** Cartridge port; multi-player port; miniature stereo headphone jack.

**SOFTWARE**

**Price:** £30-35

**Cartridge Memory:** 8Mb

**Existing Software Base:** Very small.

**Current Releases:** California Games is a great freebie!

**Prospects:** Uncertain but several new titles in the pipeline.

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** As RRP

**Second Hand Availability:** Very few

**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee.

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** \*\*\*\*\*

**Sound:** \*\*\*\*\*

**Expansion:** \*

**Overall:** \*\*\*\*

#### IN BRIEF

Nintendo were the first company to produce a dedicated handheld console and now it seems everyone wants to get in on the act. On reflection even the Game Boy was a long time coming since the technology employed by the display is starting to date.

Not to be dismissed simply because of mono graphics – this machine has some superb titles and games making use of the two-player link-up option are tremendous fun (especially the superb freebie *7th Saga*).

**GRAPHICS**

**Resolution:** 20 x 18 characters

**Colours:** 8 grey shades

**Monitor Supplied:** Yes – LCD display is lit by ambient light.

**Sprites:** 40 x 8 pixel blocks.

**Speed:** Fast for what it is.

#### SOUND

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on headphones

**Stereo Output:** Yes

**Performance:** Plays a lot better than it looks.

#### NARDWARE

**Joystick:** Built in 8-way joystick

**Ports:** Headphone socket; dual-machine interface

**SOFTWARE**

**Price:** £20-25

**Cartridge Memory:** 64K

**Existing Software Base:** The best for any handheld.

**Current Releases:** Increasing

**Prospects:** Excellent

#### BUYLINES

**Best Buy Price:** As RRP

**Second Hand Availability:** Some companies (e.g. Console Quest) do 'em.

**Maintenance:** One year's warranty

#### STAR RATINGS

**Graphics:** \*\*\*

**Sound:** \*\*\*\*

**Expansion:** \*\*\*

**Overall:** \*\*\*\*\*

#### IN BRIEF

With the weight of all powerful Nintendo behind it, the Famicom can hardly fail. Although not hugely superior to the Sega Megadrive technically, it's the games that impress – notably the bundled *World* (which will no doubt help sales no end) and *F-Zero*. That said, there are some real duffers amongst the gems (*Big Run*, anyone?), but it's still early days yet. The Super Famicom's enormous games potential has barely been scratched.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** 512 x 512.

**Palette:** 32,768

**Colours:** 256

**TV:** Yes

**Monitor Output:** Yes

**Monitor Supplied:** No

**Monitor Options:** RGB, SCART

**Sprites:** 128

**Speed:** Remarkable

**SOUND**

**Speaker Quality:** Depends on TV/monitor

**MIDI:** No

**Stereo Output:** Yes

**Performance:** 8 Channel custom 16-bit PCM/digital.

#### HARDWARE

**Joystick:** Supplied

## CONSOLES

### ATARI LYNX

**Package:** Lynx. Pay extra for peripherals and Inclusive California Games

**Processor:** 16-MHz 6502

**Console Memory:** 64K

**Recommended Retail Price:** £79.99 (£99.99 with peripherals; £129.99 with peripherals and game).

**Contact:** Atari PR (071 388) 9671

**IN BRIEF**

Designed by the man behind the

Amiga, the Lynx is an amazing handheld. After a shaky start, the Lynx is doing fine and if the rumours are to be believed – it's starting to take off in the States. Its most obvious competitor, the Gamegear, lacks the Lynx's frills, but makes up for it with smaller unit size and TV adaptor.

#### GRAPHICS

**Resolution:** 160 x 102

**Palette:** 4096

**Colours:** 16

**TV:** No

**Ports:** One big expansion port.  
**SOFTWARE**  
**Price:** £40-50  
**Cartridge Memory:** 16 Mb  
**Existing Software Base:** Small  
**Current Releases:** Lots, and plenty more planned.  
**Prospects:** How can it fail? Rack orders were in the millions before it was launched

**BUYLINES**  
**Best Buy Price:** Grey import.  
**Second Hand Availability:** None as yet.  
**Maintenance:** Take care, grey imports are rarely under warranty.

**STAR RATINGS**  
 Graphics: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Sound: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Expansion: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Overall: \*\*\*\*\*

## SEGA GAMEGEAR

**Package:** Gamegear unit.  
**Processor:** 3.58-MHz Z80A.  
**Console Memory:** 8K RAM/16K Video RAM.  
**Recommended Retail Price:** £39.99  
**Contact:** Sega (071-727) 8070

**IN BRIEF**  
 Opinion used to be that the Gamegear was going to be the handdown winner in the battle of

the colour handhelds. But times - and, more importantly, prices - have changed. The Lynx, a technically superior machine with some fine games available for it, has had its price slashed and - if US sources are correct - is enjoying a sudden upswing in support from American consumers. In the Gamegear's favour are the clout of mighty Sega and the potential to turn the unit into a portable TV via a cheap adaptor (around £50 is current estimate). But at the moment, it's anybody's game.

**GRAPHICS**  
**Resolution:** 160 x 146  
**Palette:** 4096  
**Colours:** 16  
**TV:** No.  
**Monitor Output:** No.  
**Monitor Supplies:** Yes - 3.2" back-lit colour LCD.  
**Monitor Options:** None  
**Sprites:** Not known  
**Speed:** Okay.  
**SOUND**  
**Speakers:** Quality: Good.  
**Music:** No  
**Stereo Output:** Yes  
**Performance:** Three-channel PSG sound channels + noise channel

**HARDWARE**  
**Joystick:** Eight-way joystick  
**Ports:** Cartridge port, multi-player port, miniature stereo headphones jack, TV tuner port.  
**SOFTWARE**

**Price:** Around £20-25  
**Cartridge Memory:** Not known  
**Existing Software Base:** Small.  
**Current Releases:** Few as yet, but lots in the pipeline.  
**Prospects:** Very good

**BUYLINES**  
**Best Buy Price:** As RRP.  
**Second Hand Availability:** None as yet.  
**Maintenance:** One year's guarantee

**STAR RATINGS**  
 Graphics: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Sound: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Expansion: \*\*\*\*\*  
 Overall: \*\*\*\*\*

## SEGA MEGADRIVE

**Package:** Console unit, controller, and Mickey Mouse or Moonwalker game.  
**Processor:** 8-MHz 68000 + Z80B  
**Console Memory:** 74K main, 64K video.  
**Recommended Retail Price:** £149.99  
**Contact:** Virgin Mastertronic (071) 727 8070

**IN BRIEF**  
 Excellent example of the new 16-bit console technologies. The first decent 16-bit console to receive official support in the UK.

**GRAPHICS**  
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**Palette:** 512  
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**TV:** Yes  
**Monitor:** No  
**Sprites:** 80  
**Speed:** Very fast  
**SOUND**  
**Speaker Quality:** N/A  
**MIDI:** No  
**Stereo Output:** Yes  
**Performance:** 12 channel stereo sound is produced by a custom FM chip and sounds fantastic.

**HARDWARE**  
**Joystick:** Dedicated controller supplied.  
**SOFTWARE**  
**Price:** £30-50 (typical £35).  
**Cartridge Memory:** Not known  
**Existing Software Base:** Good  
**Current Releases:** Lots  
**Prospects:** Very good

**BUYLINES**  
**Best Buy Price:** As RRP  
**Second Hand Avail:** Some companies (e.g. Console Quest) do 'em.  
**Maintenance:** One year on UK machines

**STAR RATINGS**  
 Graphics: \*\*\*\*\*  
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 Overall: \*\*\*\*\*

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# BOOK SHOP

**Sim City fans, King's Quest freaks, technical ignorami (yes, that IS the plural of ignoramus), deep space tourists, and fantasy artists, there's a book here for YOU. Sandra Vogel checks out some of the latest releases to hit the shelves...**

## THE GUIDE TO FANTASY ART TECHNIQUES

Martyn Dean  
Paper Tiger £9.95  
Art and graphics

If you have yet tried to settle down with pen and paper and produce a picture that is striking, attention grabbing, and unique, chances are that you will have given up. Fantasy art is one of the most challenging categories as you need to avoid all the old clichés and yet remain true to the genre. This new book gives an insight into how some of the greats of fantasy art go about their work: Jim Barnes, Ian Miller, Patrick Woodroffe, Philip Castle, Syd Mead, Chris Foss, Martin Rowley, and Boris Vallejo all give away some of their secrets. The book is littered with examples of the work of each of the artists included, in many cases preparatory sketches are placed alongside the finished pieces.

### GENERAL COMMENT

Whatever your artistic competence, you'll learn something from this one.

**IQ FACTOR** 5  
**SHELF LIFE** 8  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 7  
**OVERALL** 7

## YOUR SPACE FLIGHT MANUAL

Daniel Ashford and Patrick Collins  
Headline Books £10.95  
Technical

According to Ashford and Collins, you could be a tourist in space within the next twenty years, and this handy illustrated book takes you through the logistical steps which

need to be taken before space tourism becomes a reality. Development of the market, the design of the spacebus and spacecab, and the setting and maintenance of safety standards are all covered.

The authors also take note of the military imperative that has directed much of the development of space technology this far. As long ago as the 1950s, drawing boards were boasting plans for reliable space vehicles. All were shelved, however, in favour of military developments and this appears to have set the pattern ever since.

### GENERAL COMMENT

Liberal illustrated with a mixture of photographs and drawings, and full of information about the current situation and projected future developments.

**IQ FACTOR** 7  
**SHELF LIFE** 6  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 6  
**OVERALL** 7

## THE SIM CITY PLANNING COMMISSION HANDBOOK

Johnny L Wilson  
McGraw Hill £14.95  
Gaming help

They reckon that something like 400,000 copies of Sim City have been sold worldwide and while author Will Wright has moved on to Sim Earth, there are still many computer owners spending countless happy hours trying to develop the rinfame metropolises. This book is intended as a companion for these late night developers and should appeal to Sim City experts and novices alike. It includes a lot of

strategic information for playing the game and cleverly integrates this with information about real city planning, both contemporary and historical. Topics covered include town planning, transport and population issues, ecological and environmental considerations, fiscal (i.e. economical and financial) matters, and much more.

The book offers many examples of various famous attempts at structured city planning and, to the credit of the author, these examples are discussed in such a way as to be of genuine help in using Sim City rather than simply taking a dry, academic approach. Most of the chapters in the book integrate factual information and examples from the game in an imaginative manner. This helps to retain the realistic feel of Sim City itself and illustrates the power of the simulation as it sits very comfortably next to real life examples.

### GENERAL COMMENT

Every user of Sim City should get something out of this well produced book.

**IQ FACTOR** 6  
**SHELF LIFE** 9  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 7  
**OVERALL** 7

## THE KINGS QUEST COMPANION

Peter Spear  
McGraw Hill £14.95  
Gaming help

Chances are, most of us have spent some time over at least one of the King's Quest series, now in its fifth incarnation following its conception way back in 1984 as Quest for the Crown, when the format broke new ground with its animal and central character.

This book takes you through the first four King Quest games (though lack, KQS fans) and gives you vital information on how to help you complete each one. Note that this is not a hints book, however - we're talking total solutions here, but solutions with a difference. The info is presented in the form of a story and you can read as much or as little as

you like before returning to the game.

In addition to these 'serials' books, you'll find a chapter called The Easy Way Out, which takes a more step-by-step approach to some of the tougher problems. There's also a section entitled The Final Score which lists every action in each of the four games for which points are awarded. Alongside The Encyclopedia of Daventry, this little number will tell you all you need to know to crack Sierra's corks.

### GENERAL COMMENT

If you feel the need for a helping hand in KQ1 to 4, reach out for this one.

**IQ FACTOR** 5  
**SHELF LIFE** 9  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 7  
**OVERALL** 7

## THE OXFORD REFERENCE DICTIONARY OF COMPUTING

Oxford University Press £6.99  
Technical

If you don't know your CGA from your EGA, VGA, or SVGA and have never cared about any of them, stop here. On the other hand, if you have a hankering to comprehend obscure acronyms and obscure technology, you could do a lot worse than this little book, now in its third edition and newly published in paperback. Not overpriced, you get 500 pages of definitions relating to 4500 technical terms plus a reasonable splattering of illustrations.

The range of entries is wide, from Bitnet to DMA, from PRESTEL to Monte Carlo Methods (apparently not a method of birth control).

### GENERAL COMMENT

Everyone needs some sort of technical dictionary on their shelf, and this fits the bill nicely.

**IQ FACTOR** 5  
**SHELF LIFE** 8  
**VALUE FOR MONEY** 8  
**OVERALL** 8

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## MEGADRIVE



**H**ow we laughed! Here at ACE we always try to look at games from a machine-owner's point-of-view, rather than adopting that jaded-old-hack approach favoured by some of our sister publications.

So we were not a little excited when a nice batch of official Megadrive releases rolled into the office from Sega. It was like so much mana from Megadrive heaven.

Dick Tracey, Shadow Dancer, Crackdown and Gun Ground all lay next to our Drive for a brief time, looking so good. So unfrank, so ready-to-go. How wrong we were.

Although we'd waxed on and on about the perils of purchasing imported Megadrives, warning users about the incompatibility problems which may amass once a body of home-duplicated games were on the market, we'd never actually encountered the problems ourselves. Until now.

Imagine our surprise to discover that our (imported) Megadrive wouldn't even turn on with the British cartridges plugged in.

Now, our gripe is not really with this system. Sega have always maintained that people should wait for the official machine, and now their warnings have born fruit.

However, there are a number of points which make the situation far from satisfactory.

For a start, the computer market thrives on innovation, technological breakthroughs in short, the next Big Thing. With a machine as exciting as the Megadrive, trying to curb the public's excitement is a hopeless task. It is inevitable that whoever can supply the newest products soonest will get the sales.

With only minor screw-driver activity, unscrupulous owners can adept their imported consoles to run official software anyway. The result? Owners who were loyal to the Megadrive brand feel penalised by Sega for trying to board the Megadrive bandwagon early, and irritated by having to cut corners and perform experiments on their machines in order to run official software.

So, how do things lie now? Irritated import owners. Sega losing software sales to a paragon of those owners who don't fancy the screw-driver route. And those people who waited for the official UK Megadrive to appear still not able to play the newest releases. A far from happy situation.

The only way to bait the grey importers at their own game, if that is indeed what Sega wish to do, is to officially release all the new titles now, removing any possible incentive for people to buy unofficial Megadrives or games.

©Richard Evans

## IBM PC



**I**t occurred to us that we hadn't made too much of PC tips recently. Hints and chants for PC games usually aren't the stuff usually attractive pages are made of. Lots of adventure and strategy information, useful as it may be does little to live it up the pages. So, having talked to the powers that be at ACE Towers, I've had the go-ahead for a serious batch of tips this month. And so, without further ado...

## RICK DANGEROUS

More people than usual have contacted us requesting help with the exploits of the pitiful-matad adventurer. To be honest, we can't keep away from Rick ourselves, always sneaking a couple of crafty goals whenever we get the chance. If you've having difficulties in the early stages, you may find some help in the following.

## Level One

Carry on running away from the boulder which follows you. Pull to the right on the final fall to miss the boulder and the 'omble little Goolu. Kill

the next Goolu by shooting him and then collect the mask from the first step.

Avoid the third Goolu by leaving the ladder when he moves past you on the left. Run away from him and climb down the ladder.

When you enter the screen with the moving rock, let yourself fall down and hit the wooden pole at the bottom of the screen. You'll then have to dodge left to avoid the rock.

The rock will stop in the middle of the screen. Jump on top of it and then jump again to reach the wooden platform. Jump yet again to the left and touch the pole. Now jump up onto the stone platform on the right hand side and fall onto the moving rock to leave the room.

Still having problems? Why not use the cheat which the guys at Microprosa so kindly supplied, once you've got to the second level, enter POOKY into the high-scores and you will continue the game from the level you last reached.

## KINGS QUEST 4

The latest in a long line of Epic games from Sierra, Kings Quest 4 is far from an easy title to get to grips with.

## The Haunted House

Enter the parlor (on the left of the house), examine the books on the shelf and take the Shakespeare volume. Look at the picture and then examine the wall, revealing the secret door. Open the door by flipping the latch and take the shovel.

## The Minstrel

Give the minstrel the book. He will repay the compliment by giving you his lute. When you reach Pan, you must first play the lute and then make a present of it to him.

## The Dwarf's House

Enter the house of the seven dwarves and clean up their room. When they appear, they will be pleased with your cleanliness and will invite you for a meal.

Take the pouch when they leave and give it back to the head dwarf whom you discover in the mine. In return, he gives you a lantern and allows you to keep the pouch.

## The Piar

Go to the edge of the piar and wait till the fisherman enters his house. Follow him and offer him the pouch and, again, in return he will give you the pole.

Find the worm and catch it. Once you have got it, use it on the end of the pole as bait.

## The Frog on the Pond

Take the Golden Ball from under the bridge and drop it in the pond. You'll get it back from the frog. Catch the frog and (bless) kiss it.

Once the frog has turned into a handsome prince, you'll be given his crown.

## The Waterfall

Walk to the waterfall and put the crown on your head. You'll turn into a small frog who can hop into the waterfall. Take the board, enter the cave and then take the bone. It's important that you don't dither around Happy Gaming!

©Jeremy Taylor

## DIRECT LINE

To YOUR micro...

Monthly machine specific columns for the users of the six most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...





## AMIGA



**A**lthough there are plenty of digital sound sampling packages for the Amiga, this doesn't seem to stop new companies trying for a slice of the market. Whether you are interested in adding sound effects to games you write yourself, producing music and graphics demos or composing using the Amiga and/or MIDI gear, the right sound sampling system can make all the difference.

But new products have to offer something really special to compete with established packages like the new pervasive Audio Projects Sound Trap II (£29.95), sophisticated packages like Microdeal's AMAS MIDI sampling system at £99.95, or even the state-of-the-art Audio Engineer package consisting of Audiomaster II software and G-Soft's Audio Imager hardware, at £199.

Two new products which seem to have something novel to offer are Supersoft's Intersound (which costs £50), and new Dimensions' TechnoSound, which is £24.99 for the software or £34.99 including the hardware analog-to-digital converter

## sion cartridge

Intersound is a software-only package, theoretically it will work with any of the established hardware sampling units, but you would be advised to check with yours before you buy.

The software has one main window which is always open, and which allows you to display mono, left, right or stereo sample waveforms. Cursor movement, sampling selectors and editing tools appear below the window.

With a sampling rate of up to 24 KHz, you get eight samples with around 20 total time on a 1 meg Amiga. You have a good range of recording, editing, zoom, redrawing, looping, invert, fadeout and replay function; you can also add effects such as echo, reverb, flanging, vibrato and compression.

The eight samples can be selected using the SEG1-8 gadgets, and played at a chosen pitch, or you can play tunes from the Amiga's QWERTY keyboard. There are, though, no MIDI facilities.

Intersound's most unusual functions are the FM and AM modulation routines. These allow you to define one sample as a modulator which changes the pitch or volume of the other; this is the technique used by Yamaha's DX7-series synthesizers, and can create very complex sounds. But it's a very tricky business, and is unlikely to be enough incentive for you to choose Intersound in itself.

Samples can be saved in 16 or raw data format, so they could be used with practically any other sampling

## system

system. You will have to come to terms with the user Sound manual, which is pretty obscure, but this is apparently being re-written for the UK market.

Apart from having no hardware provided, Intersound offers almost all the facilities you need for recording and editing samples.

TechnoSound, though, is a much better option, not only is it cheaper, it comes complete with hardware, and incorporates a few novel features which make it more than just a sampler.

Operating in true stereo, the TechnoSound cartridge plugs into the printer port and has two phone socket inputs. The software is provided with a library of fifty example sounds including speech, synthesizer noises and game sound-effects, and though the control layout is very colourful and cluttered, a sliding menu system makes it easy to find your way around.

Apart from all the usual record, trim, cut/copy/paste, invert and loop functions, TechnoSound allows you to add to your samples a wide range of effects such as echo, reverb, phasing and vibrato.

These effects can also be added to incoming sounds in real time—in other words, TechnoSound can turn your Amiga into a digital effects unit with endless uses in home recording.

Inouts. These effects let you distort your voice until you sound like anything from a drunk to a Dalek, or even a drunken Dalek. You can use preset effects or define your own, although whether the Synth features are of any more use than entertaining yourself at parties is open to debate.

©Chris Jenkins

## ATARI ST



**T**he 2nd MIDI Music Show at Hammersmith's Novotel at the end of April confirmed that the ST is still the computer of choice for serious musicians. Around 8000 visitors attended the Show over the three days, to see over 60 exhibitors showing the latest MIDI instruments, music software, sound patches, recording systems and accessories.

The surprise launch of the Atari Mega STE's emphasised the importance of the music market, as you will probably have read elsewhere, there are three new machines—the Mega ST1, with no hard disk at £599+VAT, ST2, with 48Mb hard disk drive and 2Mb RAM at £899+VAT, and Mega ST4, with 4 Mb RAM and hard disk at £999+VAT.

New markets for the ST like mixer automation and direct-to-hard disk recording, previously dominated by the Apple Macintosh, were also hot areas. Plascom's ADAS system was launched at the Frankfurt Music Fair, but the MIDI Music Show was its first UK appearance. The system includes a hardware unit which connects between the ST and a hard disk drive, and

system software which runs on any memory size of ST. The software uses a lot of memory that you can run a sequencer such as Notator, Cubase or Virtuoso at the same time, running your MIDI sequences while simultaneously recording audio tracks such as vocals or guitar parts to the hard disk in stereo at 44.1 or 48KHz. Recording time of course depends on the capacity of your hard disk.

The ADAS software includes editing, cueing and transport functions, and an optional SPCIF card allows the system to be used as a Digital Audio Tape (DAT) editing setup. At only £800,

ADAS is the first truly affordable direct-to-hard-disk recording system.

Another affordable ST-based system is MIDIMotion, a MIDI-based music automation system. This takes the hard work out of producing a final mix from a multi-track recording, using information stored in a popular sequencer package like Cubase or Notator, the MIDIMotion hardware controls mixer channel levels in real-time. The system, distributed by 2001, works out at around £49 per mixer channel, like ADAS, it's not exactly cheap, but it is a fraction of the price of previous systems, and multiple hardware units can be connected to control larger mixes.

Another new ST product, this time from Intersound & Soft of Italy, was Sample Tools. This program is essentially a database/editor for owners of Roland digital sound samplers like the S-30. Because it allows the ST to read Roland sample disks directly, Sample Tools doesn't require you to do a time-consuming MIDI sample dump into the ST before categorising and sorting samples. There's also a real-time sample editing routine with an extensive range of graphic editing functions.

Intersound are hoping to tie up UK distribution, then produce a Sample Tools package for Akai samplers.

MIDI Music showed the latest version of PG Music's Band-in-a-Box V4.0, the impressive auto-accompaniment program for the ST, PC and Mac, which now includes more musical styles as well as user-programmable styles. Celebrity guest Keith Emerson, former keyboard whizz of Emerson Lake & Palmer, seemed impressed.

Notably absent from the Show were two major distributors, MCKNICK and Zone. However, both have major new ST bundles in the pipeline. MCM has Omega, an integrated desktop MIDI system from Dr T. The package combines KCS 4.0 (Keyboard Controlled Sequencer), a 48-track program with 128 sequences and up to 64

MIDI channels and SMPTE sync using extra hardware and Phantom software, TIGER V1.2, a graphic note and song editor, and Quickscore, a music transcription and printing program compatible with del menu and faster printers. Individual programs require 1 meg memory, and using MPE (Music-Program Environment), the whole system can be integrated, though this requires 2 meg memory. The package comes with extensive manuals and a keyboard control template.

Zone Distribution has announced a large selection of new products, Band-in-a-Box V4.0, as mentioned earlier, Freestyle, a more sophisticated ST real-time arranger with five tracks—drums, bass, piano, brass and guitar, 32 preset style plus user-definable styles, intelligent chord input recognition by MIDI, standard MIDI file for met compatibility and a MIDI Music utility. Cost is £149, and there's an upgrade offer for B-i-A-B users.

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# GAMEBOY



Nintendo certainly isn't pulling any punches in the Great War. No, I'm not talking about the conflict that engulfed the World from 1914 to 1918. I'm talking about that other Great War, the War of the Handhelds!

Nintendos are determined to win the war for their side, and as they well know - a major part of any war effort is Propaganda. Hence the recent appearance of slick flashy adverts on prime-time kids TV, trying to persuade the public that the Gameboy is the handheld every streetwise dude should be seen to be playing (and, as we all know, how right they are!).

This four-week long TV campaign is costing Nintendo a whopping £750,000 and will run until the end of June. As anyone who's seen the ad will realise Nintendo are keen to push the fact that the World's most famous Italian plumber appears on the console, a fact frustrated by grumpy-looking (sorry, it has to be said) screen shots from Super Mario Land being whizzed around the screen while a deep baritone voice mutters on about the superior qualities of the Nintendo B&W Wonder.

The third-second ad will be seen on six channels throughout the country including LWT, Central, STV, Yorkshire and Tyne-Tees. To follow up the ( hoped for ) increase in hand-held sales, Nintendo apparently intend to bring out twenty new Game Paks over the next few months.

Statistics the Gameboy appears to go from strength to strength. Apparently it's generated an amazing \$1.1 billion in sales during 1991 alone, when translated, means sales of 5 million Gameboys and 25 million Game Paks in total. Isn't that incredible, eh?

But what of the Gameboy's rivals, the Atan Lynx and the just-launched Sega Gamegear? How much of a

threat are they?

First, the Atan Lynx. This handheld has undergone some savage price-cutting in the last few months, and has dropped from £179.99 to just £79.99 - although that price is for the console alone, without any link-up cables, AC adaptors or games. With its fast colour graphics, nifty sprite technology (which can enlarge and shrink sprites of any size) and impressive sound, it's a very strong competitor to the similarly-priced Gameboy.

If truth be told, the Lynx is technically a better machine than the Gameboy, but where it falls down badly is, like all colour handhelds, its battery life. It seems that no sooner have you started playing than the batteries pack up! Another, just as serious problem is the game quality. I haven't played one game on the Lynx that has kept me as enthralled as, say, Tetris or Super Mario Land on the Gameboy.

It appears this situation is analogous to the early 80s, when the Speccy and C64 fought it out for market supremacy. Although the Speccy was less able than the C64, the game's were generally much better - the game designers were forced to rely on good gameplay to make sales rather than flashy graphics and sound.

But as game designers get to know the Lynx, things will improve, and I don't think it's far long before we see some really corking stuff coming out on Atan's machine.

And what of the Gamegear? This is basically a cut-down Master System, and its pros and cons are pretty much the same as the Lynx's, low battery life and uninspiring games. Of the two colour machines, the Lynx is the better, but Sega's higher profile with the games-buying public is bound to result in rapid volume sales.

## THE VERDICT

This brief run-down may make it seem as if the Gameboy's prospects are a bit gloomy. Not at all. Having extensively played all the three machines I know which one I prefer - for sheer long-lasting portable fun the Gameboy wins hands down every time.

And if all else fails, there's always the possibility of further price cuts to keep sale high. Which is good news for you, the consumer.

You want tips? I know how you feel - so do I! Not one letter appeared last month bearing bids, I'm very disappointed in you, Gameboys. If you don't send em, I can't print 'em!

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# HOT OFF THE SHELF

The worst thing about June is that it's just starting to get sunny and warm when - Da! Da! Da! - the dreaded exams pounce! No time to get a tan. Got to revise.

Now I know the last thing you need is to be reminded of Exam Hell. The only reason I bring it up is because the perfect break from revision is a quick half-hour with a top new game. And how do you find out what's hot and what's not? Need I go on...?

## BATTLE CHESS 2

Electronic Arts • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • PC £29.99  
Sequel-its spreads from Hollywood to the computer industry! This time round the

rules are based on the Chinese variant of Chess, which introduces some new moves, has a river bisecting the board (which some pieces can't cross) and limits the King's movement to an 'Imperial Palace'. As before the board is viewed in 3D, with all the pieces 'talking' each other in a variety of amusing and well-animated ways. While a bit slow and irritating running from floppies due to all the disc swapping, a hard disc shows the game to be far faster and more lethal than normal Chess. A game that should keep even the most jaded Chess fan happy, and provide a pleasant change for the more casual Chess player.

★ ACE RATING 895 ON IBM PC

## BOULDERDASH

Victor Musical Industries • Gameboy ¥3400 (Import)  
Yet another steal from the aging C64's catalogue of great games. Hey kids, remember this? Guide cute and cuddly Rockford around umpteen (that's journo-speak for more than) can be counted on one hand) mazes of boulders and meemies in pursuit of diamonds. But bear in mind that digging around boulders can make them tumble down on your head! An arcade puzzle game of the most addictive kind and yet another game ideally suited to Nintendo's B&W handheld wonder.

★ ACE RATING 908 ON GAMEBOY

## BRAT

Imageworks • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • IBM PC £24.99  
Where Lemmings lead the way, others now follow - and why not as long as the games are as good as Brat? Little Nathan, the World's naughtiest nappy-wearing nipper, wanders around various vertically-scrolling levels. Unfortunately he's a little stupid, and will happily walk off the edge of cliffs and into traps and monsters - unless you guide him otherwise by placing direction changing icons in his path. Those who are deft with the mouse can guide Nathan into the coins and toys littering the landscape for bonus points. A magic mix of cuteness and craftiness, Brat will have you playing into the small hours.

★ ACE RATING 850 ON AMIGA

## CHUCK ROCK

Core Design • Atari ST £24.95 • Amiga £24.95  
Unga-bunga! Poor Chuck Rock's spouse has been kidnapped by the fiendish Gary Gritter and is now held prisoner at the end of five massive levels of platform-pouncing, rock-throwing, belly-buttin' pendenonium. Graphically, Chuck is a real treat, with some hilariously animated dinosaurs and very slick 32-colour arcade-quality parallax scrolling. Although, when all is said and done, a fairly basic platform game, the varied back drops, rapid pace, novel attack

modes and humorous setting ensures that boredom won't set in.

★ ACE RATING 886 ON AMIGA

## COHORT

Impressions • Amiga £29.99 • Atari ST £29.99 • PC £29.99  
Wargames tend to fall between two stools, being too simple to satisfy the ardent fan and too tough to attract the uninitiated. Cohort, happily, manages to be all things to all people. The strategic and tactical sides of the game are rigorously realistic, yet the icon driven mode of interaction make it instantly accessible. Add some superb visuals and atmospheric sound FX (thundering hooves, clashing swords, streams of the dying, etc) and you have a fine game that will keep any would be Caesar happy for months.

★ ACE RATING 890 ON AMIGA

## FLAMES OF FREEDOM: MIDWINTER 2

Microprose • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga £24.99 • IBM PC £TBA  
Now this is a challenge, how do you sum up a huge game like FoF? The big thaw has set in, and Midwinter is now Agora, the island HQ of the Atlantic Federation. You play one of their crack agents with the task of scuppering an impending attack by the evil Saharan Empire. The majority of the game takes place in a massive solid-3D world, with your spy able to use any mode of transport he/she may come across, everything from on-foot to hell-copter. But this is no shoot-'em-up. There's more than enough strategy and subterfuge to keep any non arcade fan happy. A major contender for game of the year - already!

★ ACE RATING 950 ON ATARI ST

## 4D SPORTS BOXING

Mindscape • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • PC £24.99  
This violent clash between two solid-polygon generated pugilists is the best rendition of the 'noble art' yet seen on a home computer. The use of polygons allows the action to be viewed from absolutely any angle, and a video playback option allows you to watch that decisive upper-cut again and again. Highly realistic, with a huge range of moves and a lot

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of work to be put in if you're to  
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\* ACE RATING 900 ON IBM PC

## GODS

Renegade • Amiga £25.53 •

Atari ST £25.53 • PC £TBA

Renegade crash onto the game's scene with this, their first release - and what a corker it is! Set in Ancient Greece, the player controls a hunky warrior who must be guided through four levels of platforms, monsters and puzzles to a face-off with Something Very Nasty in the Underworld. Okay, so Renegade won't no prizes for the written-by-computer plot but the implementation is something else - superb graphics, intelligent aliens (and they are smart, too!) and bags of clever surprises and secret bonuses to discover. It seems that the Bitmaps can do no wrong. Roll on Magic Pockets.

\* ACE RATING 908 ON AMIGA

## JOHN MADDEN'S FOOTBALL

Electronic Arts • Megadrive

£39.99

What a game! The definitive US footy game yet available on any home system. The graphics are superbly realistic - as is the gameplay - and the excitement is non-stop. The sampled grunts and groans add to the action. If you're a Megadrive owner then you'd be a mug to miss this. Set out for your software shop right now!

\* ACE RATING 904 ON SEGA MD

## KILLING CLOUD

Mirrosoft • Atari ST £24.99 •

Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

San Francisco, 1997. (By the way, have you noticed how many games are set in 1997? Why the bad reputation?) The city has been enveloped by a thick poisonous smog, causing untold chaos and leaving the populace at the mercy of psychotic criminal cults. As one of the last surviving officers in the SFPD, it's your job to try and restore law and order. The game takes the form of missions, where you must try and fly your hover-bike into the City (suitably protected, of course) and try to arrest criminals and so forth. Exciting street-level action depicted in smooth 3D and a highly atmospheric plot combine in a superb game that should please any would-be

gang buster.

\* ACE RATING 915 ON AMIGA

## LEMMINGS

Pygmalion • Atari ST £24.99 •

Amiga £24.99 • PC £24.99

In an age of ever-faster vector graphics and smoother parallax scrolls, Pygmalion was the last company expected to release a simple-looking game based on the suicidal tendencies of some cutesy little rodents. The object of the game is beautifully straightforward - you must guide a certain number of randomly-meandering lemmings to safety from one end of a perilous level to the other. You can endow chosen lemmings with a range of special abilities, such as climb or dig, with which you can get them past traps and obstacles. Incredibly playable and addictive, it's a game that will hopefully encourage programmers to spend as much time on a game's gameplay as its graphics.

\* ACE RATING 910 ON AMIGA

## PIPE DREAM

EA/Lucasfilm • Gameboy £25

(Import)

Most readers will probably be more familiar with this game under its original title of *Pipemania*. All the action takes place on a 10 x 7 grid. Using a cursor you have to drop varying sections of piping onto the grid, with the aim of making a pipeline for 'flood' to flow down. Should the flood leak before it has passed through a set number of pipe sections then it's game over. Later levels introduce directional pipes (the flood MUST flow a certain way) and obstacles. Infuriatingly addictive - it's the sort of game the Gameboy was designed for.

\* ACE RATING 910 ON GAMEBOY

## POWERMONGER

Electronic Arts • Amiga £29.99

• Atari ST £29.99

A new computer classic, with the highest ACE rating ever. You play a warlord, exiled from your homeland along with twenty followers, who has just landed on the shores of 200 islands, ripe for conquering. Unfortunately the current residents are not quite so keen on your enforced leadership, and will do all they can to resist you. Using a similar viewpoint to *Populous*, the landscape is here

polygon-based and thus can be manipulated in just about any way you require. The excellent visuals are supported by highly atmospheric sound. All control is by mouse, and couldn't be easier. To play it is to worship it. An absolutely essential buy.  
**ACE RATING 973 ON AMIGA**

#### PRINCE OF PERSIA

Broderbund/Domark • Amiga £24.99 • Atari ST £24.99 • IBM PC £24.99

A game that could so easily go unnoticed and unloved by the shelf-scouring hordes looking for the latest licence. The graphics, when static, are fairly unimpressive (although they do get better on the later levels), but when they move... The animation as you guide a young Prince through umpteen levels of platforms, pits, spikes and swordsmen is quite excellent and life-like. And the gameplay, although it may sound uninspired, is as good as the graphics. Some of the action has a real Indy-style cliff-hanger aspect to it. Miss this and you'll be crying into your beer for weeks!

**ACE RATING 915 ON AMIGA**

#### R-TYPE

IREM • Gameboy £24.99 (Import)

In one fell swoop, this conversion of the classic coin-op snatches the crown of Top Gameboy Shoot-'Em-Up from Nemesis. All your old favourites are here: The Force; beam weapon power-up; Giger-esque end-of-level aliens, frantic actions, sweaty palm excitement. How do the programmers manage to pack so much into such a small package? Only IREM have the answer! If there's one nigging fault it's the warbling soundtrack, which cuts out annoyingly everytime a sound effect is played

**ACE RATING 820 ON GAMEBOY**

#### SAVAGE EMPIRE

Origin/Mindscape • PC £34.99

• Amiga ET&A

Using the Ultima VI Interface, Origin have taken a side-step from the medieval world of their previous games, and now plunge you into a nightmare scenario where you control a party of characters mysteriously transported to a dinosaur-infested Lost World. A good yarn well told and - hard to

believe I know - actually better than Ultima VI

**ACE RATING 955 ON IBM PC**

#### SPEEDBALL 2

Mirrosoft • Amiga £24.99 •

Atari ST £24.99 • PC ET&A

The sequel to the Bitmap Bros' violent '88 hit. Basically more of the same but with Improved graphics, a bigger multi-directional scrolling pitch (lestooned with bumpers and ball energisers), extra power-ups and armour to pick up or buy between games, smoother control and a depth-enhancing player manager element. Highly playable, and the power-ups do have a noticeable affect on the game. The Amiga version, in particular, is superbly atmospheric, mainly thanks to the sample-laden sound effects... More fun than beating up your ldd brother. Better, play this with your brother then beat him up

**ACE RATING 903 ON AMIGA**

#### STRIDER

Sega/Virgin • Megadrive £39.95

This coin-op conversion was reviewed some time ago on home computer. Thankfully, the Megadrive incarnation is

supremely superior - if you didn't know better you'd swear you were playing the arcade machine. Strider Hiryu has to jump and tumble through levels of arcade-perfect action. Stunning for its graphics, sound and gameplay, Strider is a must-buy for any Megadrive owner.  
**ACE RATING 919 ON SEGA MD**

#### SUPER MARIOLAND

Nintendo • Super Famicom (Inc. with grey-import console)

Could this be the best platform game available? The game follows the seemingly never-ending adventures of Mario, as he jumps and joy-rides his way through 99 sub-levels of platform action. What makes the game so special - apart from its superlative graphics, stunning sound FX (the echo in the caves has to be heard to be believed) and super-satisfying control - is the never-ending variety in the gameplay: it's not all just running and jumping. Complete this and you can consider yourself a real games supremo. The best (and, so far, only) reason for splashing out on the Super Famicom is here  
**ACE RATING 910 ON FAMICOM**

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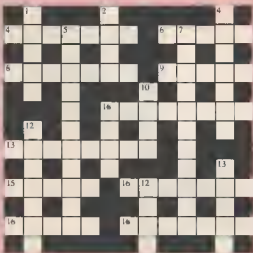
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CLUES  
ACROSS

- 4 Rule I'd broke in game by Glyn Willems (3,4)  
6 Short cars in US Gold game (5)  
8 Devo is trapped in car game from Imageworks (7)  
9 Before the heartless eninel doctor gets the game (5)  
11 First game eunt allowed from US Gold (8)  
13 Terrible risk Lisa takes forming software house (8)  
15 No ACE review of software house (5)  
16 Idol takes an ege about Elite game (7)  
18 Later becomes wide eweke (5)  
19 Cooking Goose in Spielberg production (7)



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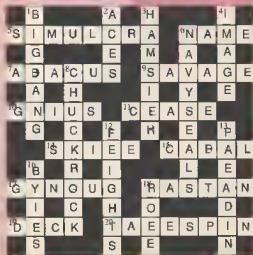
Every month we have a free game worth up to £25 for your machine. If you're the winner of the first correct crossword solution out of the hat, the address to send your solution to is: ACE July 91 Crossword, Priority Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC4A 3DF.

NOTE that the closing date has had to be changed. From now on, it will always be the FIRST day of the month mentioned on the cover - in this case July 1st 1991.

## CLUES DOWN

- 1 Article bird's written on first computer game (5)  
2 Brother excited about present (4)  
3 Spread out, rest ect strenely (7)  
5 Adoring Lers' new game from Empire (7,4)  
7 Cor! Election rigged by games producer! (11)  
10 For starters Mum's unhappy - Ded's stolen Rainbow Arts game (4)  
11 Club game (4)  
12 Count figures in game from Ubi Soft (7)  
14 Fashion maker's first moduletor-demoduletor (5)  
17 Screen symbol of flipping coin (4)

## JUNE 91 RESULT



Our monthly prize word puzzler, set by the inimitable MIPS

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anyone help me with my  
problem with tips & cheats  
etc I can help anyone with  
problems on Barbarian, Mig  
29, Savel Fighter 2.99viii,  
Sword Slayer, Army Moves,  
Agent X2 Nine Massacre  
Super Tank Sim, Rebelstar,  
Express Rader, Operator,  
Green Beret & levels 1-7 of R-  
Type & nearly completed map  
of Batman (original version)  
send SAE for answers OGL  
Pulchick Darrown,  
Machynlleth, Powys SY20  
8NS

Stuck in a game? Write to  
David Pearce 2 Power

Current Houndwin  
Southampton SO4 4FF I  
should be able to help

Somebody please help I'm  
stuck with Hitchhiker Guide to  
the Galaxy on the Amiga I  
can get out of the front door  
of Adrians house but get killed  
by the butler. A complete  
solution would greatly  
appreciated please send to  
A Fimster 19 Bannochy Rd,  
Kirkcaldy, Fife KY2 5QU

HELP I have G64 worth over  
£900 swap for Amiga A500  
Tel: 021-427-7452

Desperately need a Modern  
Write to The Samaritan  
Group, Bandon, County Cork,  
Ireland. Amiga contacts also  
wanted in Ireland 023-42181

HELP needed! Completely  
stuck on hallow of the Beast 2  
on the Amiga. Any tips,  
cheats, maps or stuff like that  
would be greatly appreciated  
Will send cash back if you can  
give me a game completing  
it eg infinite energy or as  
such!

Also help needed on the  
following games led on  
Amiga: Night braved, Total  
Recall and Robocop 2 Write  
to Ryan Humphreys (address  
above)

Musicians please write to me  
I would like help on all  
aspects and would like to  
swap sound samples,  
modules etc. Write to Mat  
PO Box 165, Lavington, New  
South Wales 2641 Australia  
or call +61-60-256883.

BEACH Volley, Ninja Spirit,  
Sword of Aragon, Ant Herds,  
Cokkedo, Shadow Warriors,  
Turtles, Shadow of the Beast 2  
Operator Stealth, Time  
Machine, Dragons Lair 2,  
Corporation, Loom F19  
Sixth Fighter, Speedball 2,  
Cadaver, Final Battle, Dragon  
Wars Pirates, Damocles,  
Castle Master, Last Ninja 2  
maniac Marathon Power  
Monger, Nightshift. If you  
need help I have complete  
guides to them. Send a SAE

to Mrs. Bazzy, 21 Southdrift  
Way Luton and a  
cheque/postal Order for £1.50  
for Covering printing costs

HELP wanted on level 3 of  
TMNT for the IBM PC Also  
send a disk for a free game  
Will supply help for Police  
Quest 1 Help and 2 and Space  
Quest 1 Help wanted on  
Conquest of Camelot. When  
at Jerusalem Weht do you do  
there? Send all mail to Troy  
Lee, "Wynlea" Barham Road,  
Dunquig 2710 NSW  
Australia

HELP I need help on King  
Quest 5 Heroes Quest 2 (PC  
version) if any one has hints I  
will hardly need it. Peter  
David, electronic Super Co,  
PO Box 21173, Amman,  
JORDAN (Middle East)

Has anyone out there got a  
Commodore Amiga 500 with  
good games they want to  
swap for a brand new G64  
with some good games? If so  
contact James Clabworthy The  
Laurels, Gornbeeshead Rd  
Newtown Abbot, Devon, Tel:  
0628-332145 any time  
between weekdays

INTO CYBER? Get online  
New Cyber Fanzone/society  
needs copy writers/artists  
Contact JLM 3 Henton Ave  
Guseley Leeds, LS20 8EE

HELP FOR ANYONE wanting  
to beat Star Command,  
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles  
and Battle Tech. Help wanted  
in destroying the Russian  
Destroyers in kamran PLUS  
any one wishing to exchange  
things on to IBM's should  
write two Sam Peters PO Box  
185 Noremman WA Western  
Australia 8443

CHAOS STRIKES BACK  
If any one is having trouble  
with Chaos Strikes Back then  
here is a useful tip. Go to the  
Demon Chamber go up the  
stairs and run straight forward  
into the pit. Now go up the  
stairs go round corner kill the  
Rock Monster go to door use  
Sold Key go down passage  
(dead end) Stand at wall

Fight the Knights for a bit then  
stand back the dead end has  
opened Run down passage  
turn right to lace wall go  
sideways slowly Press button  
Go down the stairs that are  
revealed to dragons. Then tell  
all the dragons rooms all have  
secret walls. Get the power  
towers place over eye on wall.  
Go through the passage that  
opens turn left go to the top  
of The stairs where you will  
see the courburn. Stand on  
the pressure pad step back  
then run round and grab the  
courburn. Now go back up the  
stairs to the pad you just  
stood. Now step off the pad  
onto the open pit (surprise!)  
the pit in front of you is  
opening + glowing step  
forward when shot from right  
(fast) and there is another  
piece of courburn. If the pit is  
just open drop down go  
upstairs to get courburn.  
Doing this means you don't  
have to use the emerald key  
in the Demon chamber get  
the rock monsters on the  
pressure pad and look round  
for another surprise! SM  
Southern, 6 Labanon House,  
Barnstable Rd, Bromford  
Bridge B744N B36 8RP

Help wanted in Sorcerers get  
all the girls write to Baquut  
18 Close Dervais 44400  
Reiz, France

## NOTICE

I unfortunately, due to many  
groups using the Pegasus website,  
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discontinue this part of the  
Readers Page. We apologise to  
genuine advertisers but any  
inconvenience.

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forwarded to the Federation of  
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**STICK IT IN THE**  
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Bely Kerrie Mangini Co,  
Limerick Ireland

## USER GROUPS

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latest games Send a SAE to  
C Birge 106 Bromley Heath  
Rd Downend, Bristol BS34  
6JN

## HELPLINE

URGENTLY Seeking screen  
for Nintendo Gameboy who  
can help. Any Broken  
machines which still has a  
screen please contact  
Bernard Vigi, 245 Cooperst

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# FREEBIES

**Enter Pat Winstanley with her first Public Domain column and some words of advice for anyone who wants to become a millionaire by selling PD software...**

Over the past few months Mark Smiddy has been doing sterling service on this page bringing news of the best PD around – now it's my turn to lose my footing on a mountain of disks.

First a quick update from last month – the Official STOS PD collection is now being handled by Goodman PDL (address below) NOT Sandra Sharkey in Wigan. If you don't want to wait ages while your order is 'zipped' round the country a couple of times, send it direct to Mike at Goodmans. Apparently Sandra is still receiving quite a few orders which makes for difficulties all round.

## RISE AND SHINE

New to the PD scene, but well known for their educational software such as Puzzle Book (under the name Soft Stuff), is Rise Time, which takes its name from the firm's shop in Tonbridge. Now here's an instance of prebussing the spirit of PD: all discs are sold for just 75p over the counter which merely covers the cost of disk, label and duplication. Well done! Rise Time are currently setting up for mail order and have hundreds of disks available in various categories.

## DRAGONS TOWER

**ST £2.95  
Goodmans PDL**

A few months ago Mark looked at this platform game and concluded it was just too hard. Fear not, I have a cheat for you!

If you missed the original review, you play

a cute knight collecting keys from inaccessible places. Easy peasy you might think – but you also have to contend with a horde of little purple gnomes who don't exactly chase you, but simply get in the way. Fighting is easy; just brushing against one of these guards with their stubble and studs drains your energy.

Graphics are superb and joystick control fairly precise. In fact the only thing that lets it down is the sheer speed and quantity of the baddies.

However try this for a cheat and you'll be well on your way to a hysterical romp – Press P to pause, then [HELP], then type in LEONARDO – hey presto, all your energy back. Mind you, you have to be pretty quick to press P sometimes.

## PLAY IT SAFE

**Amiga (1 Mag) £3.50  
Amos PDL**

This licencedware title is really for the kids but parents might find their consciences pricked while watching.

Taking in around half a dozen rooms in a house (pins park and garden) each screen shows an area with hazards such as scissors, training flexes, polythene bags etc. These have been left behind by a troop of nasties who have invaded the house.

The child's task (or the adult's for that matter) is to identify each hazard in the room by clicking on it with the mouse. Find all the hazards and the nasty who vandalised that room is deported.

Each time the game is run, different hazards appear due to a random factor, and each hazard found either gives a comment or query as to why it is dangerous. Highly recommended.

## STARTING YOUR OWN LIBRARY

How do you go about setting up your own PD operation? What should you bear in mind to keep within both the letter and the spirit of the law, and hopefully cover the cost of your time?

Before doing anything else you must realise that running a library takes a tremendous amount of time, energy and commitment. It demands total honesty in your dealings with both programmers and customers. Don't forget that starting any business – PD distribution included – involves certain legal obligations, not just in the way you carry on your business but also in the way you prepare for it (e.g. registration with the Inland Revenue, liability and so forth). For this rea-

## SHAMELESS PLUGS!

Software supplied by me, or otherwise:

**ST:** Goodman PDL, 18 Conrad Close, Mair Hay Estate, Langton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 1EW  
**ST/AMIGA:** Rise Time, 19 Quarry Hill Road, Tonbridge, Kent  
**AMIGA:** Amos PDL, 25 Park Road, Wigan

son, I should at this point remind readers that this article – as with any piece about starting up a business – is no substitute for your seeking expert professional advice before setting out.

Back to PD, there are three methods of distribution in the PD and shareware scene and you should be aware of the differences.

PD consists of programs on which the author has retained copyright but given permission for free distribution as long as the material is not altered in any way. Distributors are not allowed to sell the software at all but they may cover their costs (such as disks, advertising, and so on) by asking a fee.

Whereas PD may be used freely by the recipient for as long as wished, shareware is distributed (sometimes in a cut down form) as an incentive to become a paid-up 'registered' user. If you like and use the program you are expected to send the author a donation. This method falls down unless the user is very honest, since most shareware versions are either complete or near-complete. The dishonest user is the loser in this situation as sending the required donation often brings a software upgrade, a printed manual and plenty of help.

Licencedware is similar to shareware in that the author wants some money but is sold for a slightly higher price than PD with the distributor passing the extra income directly to the author by way of regular royalties. Licencedware is closer to commercial software than PD and is not freely copyable. In fact, passing a copy of licencedware to a friend is PIRACY just as much as passing a copy of the latest chart-topper.

If the very necessary, very hard work doesn't put you off, think also of how you can sell your service in an overcrowded market. Some libraries use PD as a loss leader with which to build up a customer base for the sale of other products, perhaps even commercial software. Others concentrate on a single topic such as AMOS, adventures, or education. Work hard, deal honestly, and be different – and keep your fingers crossed!

## ACE FREEBIES WORKS

ACE knows this column actually results in more sales for participating libraries – at least one has had to be rescued from under the deluge of extra mail. So why, we wonder, do we have to put so much effort into locating suitable software? If you're running a library and want to boost your business, phone Steve Cooke on 071 251 6222 for information about editorial coverage in this section.

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# ACE DIARY

## APRIL 1991

### 7-13 APRIL SOFTWARE RELEASES

**Virgin: 9ix** (CPC, £14.99 tape, £19.99 disk). Race game played for laughs between characters from notorious comic. **Judge Dredd** (CPC, Spectrum £14.99 tape, £19.99 disk). Law enforcement in Mega City One.

**Spectrum Helobyte: Flight of the Intruder** (ST, Amiga, £24.99).

**Image Works: Champion of the Raj** (ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). This one keeps slipping: follow the course of the British Raj in India.

**Millennium: Horror Zombies from the Crypt** (PC £29.99). Spooky goings-on in haunted castle.

**US Gold: Links** - additional courses (PC ETBA). More courses in 256-colour VGA from the same team which brought you *Leaderboard*.

### Sunday 7 Monday 8

Cliff Eastwood became mayor of Carmel, California, on this day in 1986.

### Tuesday 9

### Wednesday 10

### Thursday 11

1939 Darts were banned in Glasgow pubs for being "too dangerous".

### Friday 12

Yan Gargan became the first man to fly in space on this day in 1961.

### Saturday 13

### 14-20 APRIL SOFTWARE RELEASES

**Virgin: Sports of Excalibur** (ST, Amiga £29.99, PC £34.99). Survive against the Saxons in medieval tale set in Post-Arthurian Britain. **Infocom's Zork 3** (ST, Amiga, PC £9.99). Completes Infocom's classic trilogy.

**Empire: Mega Traveller 1** (ST,

**Amiga £29.99, PC £34.99). Strategy and trading game based on Games Designer Workshop's Mega Traveller.**

**Ubi Soft: BAT** (CPC disk £24.99, PC £29.99). Trading, arcade, exploration. **Pro Tennis Tour 2** (ST £24.99, PC £29.99). Sequel to last year's enjoyable tennis sim.

### Sunday 14

FA Cup semi-finals: Arsenal vs Tottenham Hotspur at Wembley, 12.00pm; Notts Forest vs West Ham 2.00pm. European Computer Trade Show opens atlington Business Design Centre. While this event is not open to the general public, rest assured you'll hear plenty about it. This is where many summer titles are previewed, but get release deals sewn up, and game prizes awarded.

### Monday 15

Anniversary of the worst-ever disaster at sea, the sinking of the Titanic in 1912.

### Tuesday 16

### Wednesday 17

### Thursday 18

### Friday 19

### Saturday 20

Snooker: Embassy World Professional Championship opens at the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield.

### 21-27 APRIL SOFTWARE RELEASES

**Virgin: Sawacon** (C64, £14.99, ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Puzzle game.

**Microprose: Railroad Tycoon** (ST, Amiga, PC £29.99). Build up your empire and get rich quick in the days of the great railway boom.

**Electronic Arts: Hound of Shadow** (PC £29.99). First time on PC for this atmospheric graphic adventure.

**Ubi Soft: Brainblasters** (C64 tape £9.99, ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Teasing puzzle game.

### Sunday 21

At Formats Computer Fair, National Motorcycle Museum, Birmingham. At last, a show for those outside London: lots of software bargains, lots of user groups and PC libraries displaying their wares (contact number: 0225 868100).

### Monday 22

SICC/Comdex exhibition opens in Paris. Big Euro event for everything from games to business.

### Tuesday 23

St George's Day - he of dragon-slaying fame. Patron saint not only of England, but also of soldiers and boy scouts.

### Wednesday 24

**Thursday 25**  
ANZAC Day in Australia and New Zealand.

### Friday 26

MDI Music Show opens at the Novotel Hammer Smith, London W6. Products, demos and seminars for computer musicians (contact number for organisers: 081 549 3444).

### Saturday 27

National Day, Sierra Leone  
Independence Day, Togo  
MDI Music Show (see above).

### 28 APRIL - 4 MAY SOFTWARE RELEASES

**Virgin: Megamix Scrolls Collection Vol 1** (ST, Amiga, PC, Archimedes £24.99). Revised release date for classic Scrolls' oldies *Fish*, *Corruption* and *Guild of Thieves*: same games, new user interface.

**Electronic Arts/Interplay: Dvorak on Typing** (PC £29.99). Not a game but a typing tutor which aims to have you touch typing on Qwerty. **Aszerty** or **Dvorak** keyboard.

**Ubi Soft: Battle Isle** (ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Arcade style game much hyped in French press.

**Image Works: Bat** (ST, Amiga £24.99). Cuts kid becomes rampaging monster at night in arcade-style hellgiantism. **Predator 2** (Spectrum, C64, CPC £10.99 tape, £14.99 disk, ST, Amiga, PC £24.99). Survive the carnage of US drug wars: from the movie of the same name.

### Sunday 28

MDI Music Show (see above).

### Monday 29

National Day - Japan (Emperor's birthday).

### Tuesday 30

National Day, Netherlands (Official Birthday of Queen Beatrix). Reports of a fire at a reactor in the nuclear power station at Chernobyl were broadcast on this day in 1986.

## MAY

### Wednesday 1

European Football Championship Turkey vs England in Turkey; San Marino vs Scotland; Ireland vs Poland in Dublin; N Ireland vs Faroe Islands in Belfast.

### Thursday 2

### Friday 3

### Saturday 4

### 5 - 11 MAY SOFTWARE RELEASES

**Empire: Wrath of the Demons** (CD-TV ETBA). Empire's bid to be first with finished CD-TV product; graphically-led quest and exploration game.

**Microprose: Gunship 2000** (PC £34.99). Sequel and update to the highly regarded Gunship.

**Ubi Soft: Music Master** (ST, Amiga, PC ETBA). Music composition package: ST and PC versions come complete with the MV16 sound cartridge, as used in Ubi Soft's *BAT* (see above).

### Sunday 5

### Monday 6

Bank Holiday UK, 1954 the first four-minute mile was run by Roger Bannister at the Hare Road track in Oxford.

### Tuesday 7

### Wednesday 8

Football: UEFA Cup final, first leg.

### Thursday 9

National Day, Czechoslovakia.

### Friday 10

Spring Computer Shopper Show opens at Alexandra Palace, London N22. New products, old ones at bargain prices and lots of discounted computer accessories (contact number 081-868 4466).

### Saturday 11

National Day, Laos Spring Computer Shopper Show (see above).

# THE W E R E F I N E D E N

## TETRIS TOO BIN'

**P**laying Tetris on the Game Boy can be bad for your image, I discovered the other day. Having developed a habit of dashing off a few games on the tube journey into work, I found myself recently on a crowded tube and, to my horror, approaching my all time high score as the train approached my destination.

As anyone who's played Tetris will know, a number of biological changes begin to take effect when the high score threshold is reached. The neck muscles begin to bulge ever so slightly; the veins on the forehead begin to pulsate, sweat runs down the fevered brow, there are uncontrollable muscular spasms as you attempt to slip the little devis into the appropriate positions, every now and then, when you make a particularly stupid move, the tortured sub-conscious forces a loud groan of despair through the puckered, quivering lips.

On this particular occasion, these changes were manifesting themselves on yours truly to a quite unprecedented degree. This was no mean high score threshold - this was the two hundred thousand mark I'd been struggling for days to pass. And, on this occasion, I blew it completely at around 185K.

At this point I involuntarily let out a yelp of anguish and, simultaneously, became aware of two things. First, my fellow passengers had all drawn back about three feet and were looking at me with - well, frankly, terror is the only word I can think of. Terror blended with total contempt and revulsion. If ever a sicko had proved beyond doubt that games were evil and that gamers were only one degree removed from violent, brainless zombies, I - this was written plainly on their faces - was that sicko.

At the same time I noticed that the train was not only in my station, but that the doors were about to close. Yes, there was only one thing for it. Having committed the unpardonable sin of letting myself go completely to pieces in public, I was now going to have to commit an even worse sin - I was going to have to Leave The Tube In An Uncontrolled And Impetuous Manner, which I did - knocking people out of the way as I barged violently through to the platform. It was, I fancy, an old lady that I noticed out of the corner of my eye, pitching backwards into the carriage, her head coming into sharp contact with one of the upright poles. Ah well.

I now travel to work by bus. And I only play Tetris in private. Let this be a lesson to all of you

used by normal, sensible people

Now, however, my modern SAVES me around £150 a year AND improves the quality of my life. I'm referring, of course, to BT's scandalous practise of charging people 43p for the privilege of telling them how to spend more money with BT - the Directory Enquiries service, in other words.

However, with my modern and my new password (available without charge from BT) I can now get as many numbers as I want, whenever I want, for around 13p per number at peak rates and only 6p per number at cheap rate. Compare that with 22.5p - the minimum charge per number using DE, which assumes that you get two numbers every time you phone, otherwise you'll be paying 43p per number.

Power users can splash out £2200 for a CD-ROM which includes every number in the country EXCEPT those in Hull. Which is a pity, because there are a lot of nice people in Hull - and they must be pretty intelligent too, because they've had an independent phone network there since the year dot.

Unfortunately I can't tell you how to get either of these services because I've lost the bit of paper on which I jotted down the contact details of the BT department responsible. It took me a day to find those out and I simply can't face the anguish of doing it all over again. And it doesn't appear to be on the database. *Bill Butler*

### IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE

The next issue of **ACE** hits the streets on July 8th - and just look at what you'll get!

- A report from the latest ACE Conference at Virgin, and a chance to join us on the next one...
- Exclusive reports from Chicago CES, featuring the latest, hottest games technology
- Coverage of Britain's first ever Virtual Reality conference in London
- All the latest games titles tried, tested, and tortured!
- A list of competition winners - find out if YOU've struck lucky with ACE...
- An all-new Tricks and Tactics section, bringing you closer than ever to cracking the world's toughest games...and much more

### NO CHECK, MATE

Hitech have outdone themselves with the Game Boy version of The Chessmaster. This wily bile has invented some rules of its own ensuring that even the staunchest grandmaster is reduced to tears. Judging by the occasional snobs of our copy, these include:

- When in danger of checkmate, freeze the game
- Do not allow your opponent to castle if he needs to
- Invent illegal moves when necessary. Let us know if you've had similar problems.

I am delighted to announce that I have found a use for my modern. You know - those things that every computer enthusiast buys as some time or another, tempted by the prospect of exciting multi-user games and enlightened on-line communication with young female gamers in the Philippines.

Instead, what you get is a stratospheric phone bill and the privilege of eavesdropping as various computer freaks discuss the advantages of UNIX over anything

### Dear Newsagent,

Allow me to introduce myself as a potential customer of your fine establishment. I am a sophisticated connoisseur of digital entertainment - a medium that will change all our lives. Please reserve me a copy ACE magazine - the most authoritative coverage of the future of games technology. PS ACE is out on the 8th of every month.

Name .....

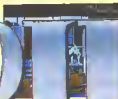
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# BILLY

# The KID



BILLY THE KID, IS A 1 OR 2 PLAYER ACTION/STRATEGY GAME SET IN THE WILD WEST WHICH ALLOWS THE PLAYER TO ASSUME THE IDENTITY OF EITHER A GUN TOTING DESPERADO WITH A HEART OF GOLD, BILLY HIMSELF, OR HIS EX-BEST FRIEND, SHERIFF PAT GARRETT.

THEY ARE IN LOVE WITH THE SAME WOMAN AND ULTIMATELY, IN A NAIL BITING CLIMATIC FINALE, ARE GOING TO END UP POINTING GUNS AT EACH OTHER. ONLY ONE CHARACTER CAN WALK AWAY FROM THIS

SHOWDOWN - **BUT THAT'S JUST THE WAY OF THE WEST.**

I.B.M./AMSTRAD PC

ATARI S.T.

C.B.M. AMIGA





**THEY DESTROYED EVERYTHING HE HAD  
ALL THAT HE LOVED  
EVERYTHING THAT HE WAS**

**NOW CRIME HAS A NEW ENEMY  
AND JUSTICE HAS A BRAND NEW FACE**



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